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FOR LIFE AND DEATH.

"NAUGHT to be done"—eh? It was that he said,

The doctor, as you stopped him at the door?
Nay, never try to smile and shake thy head,
I could ha' told thee just as well afore.
I haven't lived these thirty year to want
Parsons or women telling what is nigh,
When the pulse labors and the breath is scant,
And all grows dim before the glazing eye.

I felt that something gave here, at my heart,
In that last tussle, down there on the Scar.
Nay, never cry, fond lassie as thou art,
Thou wilt do fine without me—better far.
Thou'st been a good and patient wife to me
Sin' that spring day, last year, when we were wed.

I never meant so cold and strange to be.
Come, an' I'll tell thee. Sit here by my bed,

So, where the sunshine rests upon thy hair.
It shows almost as smooth and bright as hers,
The girl I wooed in Dunkerque, over there—
Fie, how the thought the slackening life-blood stirs!
Oh, wild black eyes, so quick to flash and fill!
Oh, rich red lips, so ripe for kiss and vow!
Did not your spell work me enow of ill,
That you must haunt and vex me even now?

I swore, as we drove out into the gale,
And staggering down mid-channel went the boat,
Never at Dunkerque Pier to furl my sail,
While I and the old Lion kept afloat:
The pier where she and her French lover laughed
At the poor trusting fool who had his due;
Quick though his hand flew to his keen knife's haft,
The English fist was yet more quick and true.

She and her beaten sweetheart, do they prate
Yet of her triumph? Let them, an' they please.
I shall know naught about it, lying straight
Up on the headland, 'neath the tall fir-trees.
I wish I could ha' been content, my lass,
With thee, and thy blue eyes and quiet ways;
Thou hast thy bairn, and as the calm years pass,
Thou wilt forget thy stormy April days.

Thou'rt young and bonnie still, my wench.
Thou'lt make
A happy wife yet. Choose some quiet chap
Who'll love the little 'un for thy sweet sake,
And bear thee to some inland home, mayhap.

We're rough and stern, we on the seaboard
bred,
And can't forget, or smooth a rankling
wound.
Come close; there's just one thing left to be
said,
Before I'm dumb forever, underground.

Last night they watched the lifeboat driven
back,
The rocket battling vainly with the blast,
While the good barque, amid the roar and
wrack,
Drove headlong—struck—and lay there
hard and fast.
They neither saw nor heeded; as the flash
Of cold blue fire lit all, above, below,
The French flag flying o'er the whirl and
crash,
"Louise, Dunkerque," the letters on her
prow.

I saw, plunged, fought, and reached the sink-
ing bark,
The old hot poison fierce in every vein,
Seized on two sailors, shrieking in the dark,
Bore them to land, and turned to swim
again.
Clasping the rigging yet one man I found;
I caught him, struggled on; the beach was
near.
"Louise!" he gasped, and 'mid the roar
around,
I knew the voice last heard on Dunkerque
Pier.

The murderer's lust surged to the throbbing
heart,
The murderer's cunning loosed the saving
hand.
'Twas but to let him go; I'd done my part—
Praised and avenged! Why, thus 'twere
well to land.
But she—No cloud on her bright life
should rest,
An' I could ward it; love and hate at strife
A moment, then, snatched from the breaker's
crest,
I dragged him, stunned and bleeding, back
to life.

Somehow I hurt myself, and so it's over,
And better so for all. Thou'lt rear the lad
To make some Yorkshire lass an honest lover,
Nor tell him all the wrong his mother had;
And sometimes—for thou'rt kind—when
stars are out
In the green country, where no tempests
blow,
Thou'lt say, "Thy father had his faults, no
doubt,
But still, he died to save his bitterest foe."

All The Year Round.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
ROMANCE IN BUSINESS.

THERE is more romance in the world than ever there was, though it changes its aspects and becomes popularized as society grows older. Any keen-sighted bystander at one of the great London railway stations can hardly doubt it, as he watches the crowded morning trains discharging their loads on the bustling platforms, and traces the deep-worn signs of the never-ending struggle for existence on faces sharpened by intelligence, that are sickly, anxious, or excited. And what a freight of hopes and cares, of doubts and eager ambitions, is carried out of port in each ocean steamer that puts forth from our shores for America or the colonies! Material might be found in the feelings or passions of the passengers — to say nothing of the actual stories of the older of them — for any number of sensational studies of character by such an analyst of human nature as George Eliot. The emigrants who go abroad to seek their fortunes are of all ranks; and the more ignorant or unsophisticated they may happen to be, the more apprehensive they may feel of the unknown that lies before them; while enterprise goes hand in hand with education, and the great majority of the middle classes are forced into a battle of life in which the prizes are to the intelligent, the enduring, and the fortunate. Most of them, it is true, must be content to scrape along as best they can. Yet even careers that are apparently the most uneventful are often sufficiently checkered; while to counterbalance some brilliant triumphs, there are failures which are simply unmitigated tragedy.

As for the stirring romance of the olden time, it chiefly took the form of warlike adventures. Yet even then there were striking exceptions, and the story of trading under difficulties from the earliest ages might furnish abundant material for a most fascinating work. Great gains by commerce were only to be got at extreme personal risk. Any peaceful trader with the reputation of wealth was likely enough to lead the life of the lucky digger among the roughs and refugees of a mining camp in the Sierra Nevada; and the

moneyed minority of the helpless middle class went in perpetual terror of violence and exactions. In the way of personal adventure, think what yarns the forecastle men in the Phœnician fleets must have had to spin, when, after their interminable cruises to Tarshish and elsewhere, they came home with their holds full of apes and ivory. Everything seen by those primitive navigators and their successors was new and strange: ruthless savages were everywhere in waiting for them on the inhospitable coasts they skirted without a compass; monsters were known to lurk in the currents and whirlpools of the ocean; and rumor, distorted by unfamiliar tongues, magnified mysterious perils till the wildest tales took form and substance. As to the feats of the seamen of antiquity, fancy might have to fill in the meagre outlines supplied by sacred or secular writers; but if we leave the hazes of semi-mythical story for the adventures of the Middle Ages, we emerge into the clear light of history. The Italians, succeeding the Greeks and their Roman ancestors, have inherited the empire of the seas. We see the men of Pisa and Amalfi, the Venetians and the Genoese, fitting out expedition after expedition for the gorgeous East, storming cities, settling colonies, making wars and alliances with kings and emperors, — and all, be it remembered, in the way of trade. Chivalrous soldiers, like the "blind old Dandolo," or Embriaco, the dashing crusader of Genoa, might be carried away by the thirst for fame, and seek to emulate the exploits of the martial heroes of feudalism. But it was the policy of their States that furnished them with the means of fighting, and that policy was steadily directed to opening up profitable markets. The Genoese in particular, warlike as they showed themselves, were traders *par excellence* — so much so, that when the fanaticism of the Crusades, fanned by the preaching of zealots, was plunging half western Europe into insolvency, they never lost their heads for a moment. Peter the Hermit would have thundered to heedless ears had he set up his pulpit in a Genoese piazza. They sent their fleets to Palestine, it is true, but only to

carry freights of Crusaders; and the leaders who chartered their galleys had to pay handsomely, either in hard cash, or concessions of mercantile privileges. So it was all in the way of business that they hired out the famous crossbowmen who served against the Montforts in Brittany, and fought for the unfortunate French monarchy at Crecy.

We have merely indicated some of the most stirring episodes in mediæval trade; and its chronicles of active adventure are scarcely so thrilling as the stories of sustained endurance by money-getters. The whole history of the Jews is sensational, from the time they were singled out as the chosen people; but nothing concerning them seems more wonderful than the tenacity of resolution with which they would persist in growing rich, though their reputation for wealth and their helplessness must have made their lives well-nigh intolerable. The Jew had no protection from the Church, which was almost the sole shelter of the feeble from the tyranny of the strong. On the contrary, the superstition of the age, which otherwise put some check on violence and exactions, was all enlisted against him. Kings carried favor with the clergy by plundering the common victim, and, by consecrating a share of the spoil, made easier terms with their confessors. Each rapacious baron and robber knight was always on the look-out to lay hands on the wandering Israelitish trader, and to hold him to ransom. If the Jew were rich, he had to bleed his money-bags freely before the castle gates were unbolted for him. He might be penniless and an object of charity to his kinsfolk, but no one believed his asseverations of poverty: he was put to the torture all the same, till possibly he expired in agony. The scene in the dungeons of Torquilstone, which Scott has depicted so vividly, was no imaginary one. In the cities, the Jew had to wear the meanest clothing when he went abroad; though probably at family festivals, when the house was shut up, his women were dressed in the most costly garments and jewellery. So he had not even that vain satisfaction of display in which his enfranchised descendants are

fond of indulging. Then, where there was a Jewish colony in a city, the inhabitants were locked up like wild beasts in their quarter after certain hours. Nor was the humiliating confinement altogether unwelcome, since in a measure it assured their safety. Yet every now and then would come an outbreak of popular fanaticism, when the mob insisted on having their share in the spoil, which was ordinarily monopolized by their betters. Any improbable fable of Jewish bigotry served for the pretext; and the general form of these fables showed that churchmen were more or less at the bottom of the movement. It was a Christian child stolen and sacrificed with horrible rites, or an insult to the sacred wafer that had been sanctified in transubstantiation. The ready credence given to those malignant reports showed the horror with which the infidel Jew was regarded; and yet the people who held him practically at their mercy, had more substantial grievances against him. For he throve by usury, more than by ordinary trade; and we may be sure that his terms were sufficiently extortionate. In the first place, having monopolized the mediæval loan and discount business, he could deal with the impecunious very much as he pleased. He knew that he made an enemy when he placed a loan, and the speculations on which he staked his life were risky enough to justify him in charging usurious interest. The acquisitive and greatly enduring race had just as much precarious protection as it chose to pay for; it had to resign itself to a fluctuating percentage of sacrifices; and the perpetual apprehension of ruthless exactions must have been more trying to covetousness than the bitter reality. Yet they persisted in the worship of Mammon with the same constancy with which they clung to their creed, and suffered for the sake of their money with the sublime heroism of martyrs.

Passing on to times comparatively recent, we have the romantic perils of the southern trade, when Moorish corsairs swept the Mediterranean, and when the captive merchant or mariner had to languish in captivity till his friends could

forward the amount of his ransom; when the ailing succumbed to the hardships of the *bagno*, and the strong who were unredeemed were chained to the benches of the galleys, and had to face the Christian shot while mercilessly flogged to their tasks. Many a fiction that falls far short of the reality has been composed on the miseries of these floating hells; on the desperate sea-fights of the pirates with the cruisers of the Christian powers, and those that were manned by the warlike knights of Malta; on the scenes that were witnessed when the church-bells and the signal-fires announced a descent on some unguarded bay of the Mediterranean. Not that the Grand Turk and his Moorish tributaries had a monopoly of piratical trading. The buccaneers, who succeeded the gentlemen adventurers, and were the precursors of the modern privateersmen, called themselves traders after a fashion. The money they invested in swift-sailing ships brought them in great profits and quick returns, though the risks were proportionate. With a courage worthy of nobler objects, they made it their business to seize the harvests that others had gathered in. In their own wild way, like the vindictive Frenchman De Montbar, they set up for redressers of wrong and ministers of righteous vengeance; and so they speculated in the capture of Spanish galleons, and of the strongly fortified seaports that were the treasure-houses of the Indies. And some of these early adventurers may be said to have been among the original promoters of joint-stock enterprise. Not only did they club their means to fit out their ships, associating their crews with them on the co-operative system, but they found sleeping partners among respectable merchants, who were content to pocket a handsome though uncertain percentage, while closing their eyes to questionable proceedings. *Non olet* was the British Solomon's "most princely answer" when informed by Master George Heriot that the money procured for his necessities came from an Alsatian usurer of indifferent repute. *Non olet* was the motto of many a decent church-goer in the good cities of London or Bristol when he built up the founda-

tions of some family of landed gentry with the gold that had been stained with the blood of Indians and Spaniards, or with the more infamous gains of the cold-blooded slave-trade.

But modern joint-stock enterprise may be said to have been fairly floated with the gigantic bubble companies of the eighteenth century. Strangely enough, the sums risked in the infancy of those undertakings were relatively out of all proportion to anything that has been witnessed in our own times, which are generally believed to be the days of speculation *par excellence*. Nor, so far as the romance of widespread suffering and ruin was concerned, are they ever likely to be surpassed. The Scotch, though energetic and enterprising enough, have a well-earned reputation for "canniness,"—yet Scotland actually went mad over the Darien scheme; and the difficulties interposed in the way of the enterprise, only urged the Scots to foolhardy and desperate persistence in it. Disowned by the king who had granted their charter; intrigued against by his servile representatives abroad, who closed the foreign bourses and our colonial markets to them; deserted by the wealthy subscribers in England, Holland, and the Hanseatic cities,—they still pressed forward the Darien venture on their own account, sending expedition after expedition on forlorn hopes to a pestilential territory infested by savages and menaced by a powerful civilized enemy. We may measure the hopes that were doomed to crushing disappointment by the fact that half the coin then circulating in the northern kingdom had passed into the coffers of the ill-fated company; while the mortality among the miserable adventurers shows figures still more melancholy.

When Patterson dazzled his country-people with visions of his Darien El Dorado, he addressed himself to their intelligence as well as to their cupidity. The site of the proposed colony had commanding commercial advantages; and had it not been for an outbreak of English jealousy, the scheme might have been a grand success. Even the English "South Sea bubble" had a certain solid founda-

tion. But it was another Scotchman, the son of an Edinburgh goldsmith, who proved the grand magician of speculative finance. Undoubtedly William Law enjoyed opportunities which must be the envy of his ambitious modern imitators. The materials his constructive genius went to work upon were a lavish, embarrassed, and almost arbitrary court; a needy aristocracy that had pledged their expectations beyond reasonable hope or even possibility of redemption; and a trading class whose narrow notions of growing rich had been hitherto limited to drudgery and economy. He appealed alike to the shrewd, the half-educated, and the ignorant. The magnificent faith he professed in the boundless resources of credit made ready converts among statesmen who had ideas without information, and were only too eager to be dazzled by golden illusions. Adventurer, gambler, and enthusiast as he was, Law might have been a sound though daring financier had he been gifted with greater discretion or self-control. We may understand how difficult it must have been, even for men of judgment unguided by experience, to draw the line between the practical and the fantastic in his programme, and to resist the seductive sophistry of his eloquence when it was apparently backed up by tangible results. The prudent duke of Savoy listened, was tempted, and reluctantly held back. He had no objection to offer to the specious arguments of the projector, except that "he was not rich enough to ruin himself." The more reckless regent Orleans could "plunge" with the Scottish projector with greater confidence. If he had not capital, he had what seemed to represent it, in his power of issuing those peremptory decrees that created a spurious currency and opened to the State a fictitious credit. Had the regent contented himself with moderate profits, his authority, with Law's ingenious audacity, might have made an excellent tunic of a temporary partnership. But it was not in the nature of the brilliant spendthrift to draw the stakes and realize, so long as fortune befriended him. Besides, excitable and impoverished Paris had fairly lost its head; and it was easier to set such a ball rolling than to arrest it. Then were witnessed such scenes of financial excitement as the world has never seen before or since. There was a rush to the Bank of France, to exchange gold and silver for empty promises. There was a crush of escutcheoned carriages in the Rue Quincampoix, where the magician

had his hotel; and his *levées* were crowded day after day by nobles and ladies of the highest quality. The heads of the great hereditary houses of France had become the courtiers of the *parvenu*, and jostled each other in their obsequious servility. Nor, although rank and position had their advantages in the way of securing preference in applications, was there any jealous exclusiveness of classes. Anybody who had scraped together a handful of livres could buy some scrap of the scrip in the open market. The purchase effected, the gain was sure, for the inflated scrip was going up like a balloon. The Prince of Conti took advantage of the convenient situation of his hotel, and a Bourbon prince was seen hiring out booths in his gardens to vociferous stockbrokers at fancy ground-rents; while a hunchback is said to have done even a more ingenious stroke of business, by offering his hump as a writing-desk to the mobs in the Rue Quincampoix. Nor was it only French treasury paper that was offered for sale. In the Mississippi project, which was affiliated to the credit schemes, Law anticipated the idea of recent projectors who have palmed American silver-mines on sanguine English investors. He had to deal with a public who were even more ignorant of geography, if not more confiding. And so, on the faith of golden ingots, falsely guaranteed as genuine by being displayed at the Bank of France, a league of swamp or forest in Louisiana, poisoned by fever and overrun by savages, came to sell readily for three thousand livres. Considering the novelty of the whole idea, which based a lucrative joint-stock enterprise, with shares duly numbered, allotted, and registered, on the wild dreams of such a delusive *El Dorado* as had lured so many English adventurers to their ruin, it is difficult not to admire the magnificence of the swindle. The inevitable day of reckoning came, when, owing to the ingratitude of the great nobles, whose avarice outstripped his liberality, the enchanter's wand was to lose its virtue prematurely. A run for money, on the bank, originating in the malice of the Prince de Conti, precipitated panic and universal ruin; while Law, who was with difficulty protected from the rabble, disappeared ignominiously from the scene of his triumphs. We have dwelt at some length on his career, because he was undoubtedly the greatest and most original of "city men;" although we must confess that his dying poor, after all, leaves an indelible stain on his reputation. It would

almost appear as if he had succeeded in deluding himself—a sure indication of weakness. He left his realized capital behind him in France, having actually locked away a great part of it in landed property. Had he lived in our days, he would have taken the obvious precaution of insuring against misfortune in the Dutch and English funds—if, after consultation with the most eminent Parisian jurists, he had deemed it unsafe to make magnificent settlements on his wife.

Speculation was a novelty in Law's time, and great fortunes made in trade or commerce were far from common. No doubt there were cases where some English merchant showed abilities and energy that carried him out of the beaten track, and many another great house beside that of the De la Poles had been built up upon dealings in the warehouse or over the counter. But it is singular that trade had fallen out of favor with our higher classes since the Wars of the Roses and the reigns of the Yorkish princes, when members of the aristocracy and dignified churchmen, buying and selling by accredited agents, had regular business relations with French and Flemings. Business had come to be held in contempt; the grandson of the trader, who had possibly been ennobled, lived among the landed gentry, ignoring his mercantile origin; and the gentry, who might be envious, as they were certainly contemptuous, professed to hold money-making in any shape as ignoble. They would draw no nice distinctions between the petty tradesman who lived over the shop, and the merchant who traded to the Levant or the Indies with his argosies floating upon every sea. So that even success in trade became a social disability. The wealthy son of the great Turkey house longed to cast his City slough, and shine in the circles his business closed to him. But as his money was the surest card he had to play, where his father had been frugal he was apt to turn spendthrift; or else he bought a high-born wife, with the paternal gold, and made a fresh start in life on the strength of his noble connections. Now we have changed all that, though the process has been a gradual one. The old social barriers have been breached in so many places, that they may be said to be practically broken down. The younger sons of dukes and marquises get a respectable living out of cottons and sugars; peers of good descent, who may be Cabinet ministers as well, are sleeping or active partners in

famous mercantile firms; while we know, of course, that no big joint-stock company has a chance of success without the countenance of the aristocracy. But above all, there are moneyed houses of colossal means and connections, which form in themselves a select financial aristocracy, with such an influence as no mere landed magnate could ever boast. It is true that we can point to many a great nobleman or prelate in history who for the time has made himself practically omnipotent either by commanding gifts as a statesman or by his obsequiousness as a court favorite. But his influence, great as it may have been, has died with him, if circumstances did not put an end to it in his lifetime. While such an ascendancy as that of the Rothschilds, for example—we make no apologies for mentioning by name a family which has asserted an absolutely unique position—is extended over all the world without exception, and seems as solidly established as anything can be in the precarious conditions of mortal existence.

The rise and progress of the Rothschilds is certainly the most remarkable chapter in the personal romance of business. The old Judengasse of Frankfort, though it has always teemed with shrewd and scheming brains, never sent forth a more quick-witted lad than the progenitor of the line of mighty millionaires. Beginning as an errand-boy, we believe, and raising himself steadily, he made many losses as well as profits in his time; but he was never known to miss an opportunity. He possessed dash, prudence, and extraordinary calculating powers in an almost perfectly balanced combination. The pet of fortune, he never presumed on her favors; and the troubled times in which his lot was cast, marvellously served his extraordinary sagacity. Europe was convulsed from one end to the other, and the funds everywhere were rising and falling with the changing fortunes of successive campaigns. Rumor, with its innumerable tongues, was mingling truth with falsehood in almost inextricable confusion, and making the wildest forecasts of probabilities. At first Rothschild felt his way cautiously with an extraordinary tact. With constant practice his tact developed into a genius which seized the occasions for its exercise when less prudent men stood hesitating, and so missed the golden chance. As his speculations turned steadily to gains, he played his game with increasing assurance, by securing exclusive and early information. When once a man can make

his game upon certainties, his gains are only to be measured by his credit. And the daring speculator's reputation for probity kept pace with his financial successes. Never did a life better point the moral that honesty is the best policy, than that of the original Rothschild. When half the princes of Europe were running for their lives, to borrow Mr. Bright's kindly observation on the troubles of the Irish landlords, more than one of these potentates, like the prince of Hesse, intrusted the shrewd Hebrew with the treasures they had to abandon. Though there were no legal means of "checking his intromissions," he accounted for everything to the uttermost farthing. No doubt he was richly paid by commission, as he deserved to be; but his best reward was in the character for integrity which has been bequeathed to his representatives and successors. Yet though Rothschild was scrupulously upright in his dealings, he is said to have been formidable to remorselessness. He went ordinarily on the principle of "Live and let live;" nor was the leviathan known to have done any injury to the smaller fish who did not wantonly interfere with him. But no aspiring rival ever directed an attack on him without having bitter cause to repent it. Tales are told of the fatal though legitimate traps laid by the long-headed old man as he stood under his favorite pillar. For a brief season the course of the stock markets would seem to have turned against him, and the securities it was his interest to "bull" would be handed over to the mercies of the "bears." The turn of the markets was only delusive: when his adversaries were fairly involved at a considerable temporary sacrifice, the many strings he pulled would mysteriously tighten, and the exulting gang of enemies would be "cornered" and crushed.

Bon chien chasse de race; and it is remarkable how the heirs of the family have taken after their founder. Their Jewish blood may have had something to do with it, and the pride of a position absolutely unique. Baron James, who died the other day in middle age, was one of the rare exceptions. He loved the arts for their own sakes, in place of simply patronizing them as one of the duties attaching to a millionaire's position. But even in Baron James the hereditary instincts came out so far that he attended assiduously to the business he never cared about. The Rothschilds, till lately, have married among themselves, keeping their vast ac-

cumulations in the family, and making the firm a close corporation; while no one of them seems to have been tempted by the possession of unlimited means to fritter away his time and talents in dissipation. Nor are their habits of steady application in any way surprising; for, setting aside their natural business aptitudes, the interest of such a connection as theirs must be almost inconceivable. Not only are they colossal financiers, but necessarily cosmopolitan politicians on the grandest scale. Before now they have put their veto on a European war by closing their strong-boxes to an emperor's application. If funds are indispensable to the regeneration of a struggling country, and to the pleasant understanding of the powers who are concerned in its fortunes, it is the Rothschilds who are appealed to for the necessary advance. When once an appeal of the kind is made, they are very much masters of the delicate situation. Should they decline for any reason, when the refusal is published minor capitalists are shy of entertaining proposals which are already prejudiced in the opinion of the public. Should they accept, their very name launches the loan handsomely. So it is in a lesser degree with mines, railways, land-schemes, or anything else; for unlimited credit is an irresistible force, and money must necessarily breed money. So when the active members of the firm go on progresses abroad, they are *fêted* by princes of the bluest blood, in defiance of antiquated State ceremonial; while they drop into dinner in an off-hand way with the presidents and past ministers of brand-new republics. We may conceive the delicate flattery paid to the omnipotent financier by the host who is meditating on future loans for the schemes that are associated with his dearest ambitions. Nor is it merely on such a magnificent scale that the Rothschilds carry on their lucrative business. The avowed establishments of the great firm are the head-centres of innumerable ramifications. From Hamburg to the Havanna, from San Francisco to the Spice Islands, we understand there are leading local firms which in reality are anonymously affiliated to the Rothschilds, and which, being on the spot and thoroughly conversant with the local trade, are on the outlook to avail themselves of profitable openings.

For money must go on gathering like the avalanche, which accumulates more rapidly the longer it rolls. The undertakings of a house of European reputa-

tion may be measured by its energy or ambition rather than by its actual resources. Everybody is ready and eager to deal with it, knowing that its co-operation in any rational speculation almost suffices to insure success. When we are tiding through times of financial agitation, it has reserves to meet any conceivable strain. The vessel is not only well found, but strongly manned and ably commanded; and when the storm has swept over and the air has cleared, it profits by the shipwrecks of its weaker rivals. We remember how the Count of Monte Christo, in Dumas's famous money romance, expressed his views to Danglars the banker as to fortunes of various classes. So there are houses of the second and third rank, of the highest respectability or something more, that work smoothly along in the old grooves, and transact an extensive business on the hereditary traditions. In these there is very little romance, though their profits fluctuate with the conditions of trade. As partners die or withdraw, they bequeath their interest to their representatives; and the reversion to a share may be a more reliable asset than the prospective succession to a large landed property nowadays. Occasionally, nevertheless, there is a disagreeable surprise and a dramatic catastrophe. People rub their eyes one fine morning over a paragraph in the City articles, announcing the stoppage that spreads dismay among confiding creditors. The books have been placed in the hands of a distinguished firm of accountants whose names have sinister associations with many similar disasters, and the stereotyped assurance is expressed that the liquidation will prove favorable. The hope carries little consolation for the initiated. Now that the mine has been sprung, they understand all the melancholy story by intuition, and are as much surprised as disgusted at their blindness. There are almost invariably reasons for such a crash, which it ought to have been almost impossible to keep secret. Large sums had been paid out on the death or retirement of moneyed partners, and the business had been unduly drained; or it had passed into the hands of men of a younger generation, too enterprising to walk in the ways of their fathers. The gentlemen who have gone into the "Gazette" are no doubt to be blamed, and possibly they may have come to grief under aggravated circumstances; yet even then it is difficult not to pity them. If sufferings can atone for

faults and follies, they must already have wiped out a heavy instalment of their moral liabilities. We can hardly conceive a more wearing life than that of a man of naturally honorable nature who, has been clinging desperately to a slippery ledge with the abyss of dishonor yawning beneath him. While making efforts as desperate as discreditable to avert the evil day, he fully realizes the fate that awaits his confiding business connections, and his tormenting conscience refuses to be silenced. In the fear that any show of retrenchment will irretrievably shatter his credit, he resigns himself to lead the life of a swindler. The dinners at which he entertains his victims, his equipages, the expensive education and allowances that are suited to his children's imaginary prospects, are all become parts of a shameful system of imposture. He dare not take the wife of his bosom into his confidence, though she begins to be troubled by ominous forebodings as she listens to his mutterings in restless dreams, and marks him in the gloomy moments of reaction that follow his ghastly attempts at joviality. The sufferings he has endured and the sacrifices he has submitted to, show the importance he attached to maintaining his position; yet it is almost a relief when the crash comes, and he breathes more freely when the mask has been dropped. The worst of it is — and he has been lamenting it when too late — that he has cast his character after his fortune. But in a worldly point of view, unless he has been driven into overt criminality, it is likely that he comes off better than he deserves. For creditors in the City, under circumstances of the kind, show themselves strangely lenient and forgiving, — partly, perhaps, because they have a sympathetic sense of the temptations to which their defaulting comrade has succumbed, but chiefly because they have no idea of throwing good money after bad by wasting valuable time in vindicating public morality. They write off the loss, and all is said, excepting by some irrepressible outsider with limited means, who, unluckily for himself, happens to be beggared.

But frequently of late years, under circumstances very similar, the circle of outsiders has been indefinitely enlarged; and the transfer of a well-known business to the promoters of a joint-stock company, seems to us to be always *prima facie* suspicious; so far suspicious, at least, that a prudent investor should always make searching inquiry before

applying for shares. There are many cases where the business and good-will have proved worth the purchase money, as reference to the share-lists will show. But at best, as the sellers best know their value, they cannot possibly be worth more; and if the prospectus holds out expectations of high profits, that only proves that the concern is essentially speculative. One can merely buy into it, as you purchase the shares of a flourishing bank — where, though original holders may be drawing twenty per cent. or more, at current prices the returns may represent about a quarter of that. We take it, then, to be a simple axiom, and no want of charity to assume, that those who turn a private concern into a public one have made a good bargain for themselves. They have estimated at a fancy price "potentialities of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice," and probably have exacted a handsome consideration for hazardous liabilities that began to make them uneasy. They may be honestly sanguine, though anxious. They "show their good faith," as the prospectus intimates, by consenting to accept a portion of the price in paid-up shares, and by giving their invaluable assistance to the board in the capacity of managing directors. Schemes of the sort are not the less dangerous that the public is likely to be seduced by well-sounding names and plausible figures. Perhaps the company has been floated in a time of general confidence, when money is plentiful and speculation buoyant. As it receives an influx of capital, it has a fresh accession of business. For a year or two it pays wonderful dividends, and the shares go on mounting in proportion. The great annual meetings are scenes of general congratulation; and any inquisitive shareholder who asks inconvenient questions is civilly sneered down or summarily silenced. Anything that tends to depreciate the market value of the shares revolts the best feelings of the assembly. The hands of the managing directors are strengthened by cordial votes of confidence, and they are encouraged to increase the stakes and go on extending their operations. But times grow bad, and money tightens. The high-pressure income can only be maintained by doing business that becomes more and more risky, while engagements are renewed on onerous terms. But the dividends must be kept up by hook or crook; for any sharp drop in the shares means the collapse of indispensable credit. If time

were no object, and the City kept calm, things might work round. But similar operations are being carried on simultaneously in innumerable quarters; over-confidence has engendered a rotten state of trade; and the City is on the eve of one of its periodical panics. It must be remembered, too, that the tendency to such panics is far greater than formerly. Now, with the general diffusion of speculation, London is but one of many speculative centres; and causes operating in Paris, Berlin, or New York, communicate themselves directly in English enterprise. Confidence is shaken; money is called in; doubtful paper is subjected to the most searching scrutiny, and can only be negotiated on ruinous terms. Ugly rumors circulate freely, and respectable reputations are whispered away. Trifling failures are succeeded by others of growing consequence, till some conspicuous establishment like that we have been alluding to, suddenly comes to the ground with a crash that shakes everything in the neighborhood. So the panic is in full swing, and the Stock Exchange in frenzied agitation.

The most disastrous of all panics happened fifteen years ago, when Overend, Gurney & Co. closed their doors. Nor have we even now recovered altogether from its consequences, though it may be feared that its lessons have been in great measure forgotten. No one who witnessed it will be likely to forget the aspect of the City on that memorable black Monday. Men were slow to realize the extent of the disaster; but when once it had come home to them, they lost faith in everything. "Overend's," or the "shop at the corner," as it was familiarly called, had been a typical house. It had been built up carefully by cautious Quakers; the names of its successive partners had been synonymous with philanthropy and probity as much as with substance and safe trading. When it had been transformed into a limited company, its shares had been taken up by shrewd capitalists, and its transactions were known to be more extensive than ever. Few people suspected that, before it changed hands, the character of the management had also been changing. Experience and prudence, or the reverse, make all the difference in bill discounting, between handsome returns and desperate risks. And it is a golden rule in money-dealing as in cobbling, that a man should stick to his last and not meddle with promiscuous irons. Thanks to neglecting some ele-

mentary rules, the great establishment at the "corner" came down while the mass of City folks still firmly believed in it. It was rumored, as it might have been taken for granted, that the most strenuous efforts had been made to avert the catastrophe. The managers were said to have taken a cabful of their books to the parlor of the Bank of England; but the bank directors had not seen their way to lending the needful assistance. It was not to be expected that the national loan establishment should have stretched a point to assist competitors who had been in the habit of systematically underbidding it. But it was argued, in ignorance of the circumstances, that where Overend's failed to find accommodation, other credit-houses must seek it in vain; and there were those who went so far as to say that the bank itself might be in difficulties. And in fact there was some slight foundation for that assertion—inasmuch as, soon afterwards, on the question of the discount rate, the associated joint-stock banks put pressure on the old lady in Threadneedle Street by threatening a combination to exhaust her reserves.

All that serves to explain the frenzied state of mind into which the great failure had thrown the city. Operators on the Stock Exchange saw their opportunity, and hastened to avail themselves of it. Never did the "bears" have a better time; and the faces of legitimate investors who flocked eastwards to look after their property, and who had thought of cutting short probable losses, were so many pitiful studies in the tragic and grotesque. It was then that the ignorant who had been investing so lightly began to realize the full meaning of "limited" liability. It was then they began to suspect the policy of the brokers' favorite maxim, which warned them against putting all their eggs in one basket. The feelings of the father of a family who held shares in a single shaky credit establishment were by no means enviable; but in cases where he had "distributed his risks," excitement was wrought up to agony-pitch. It was not simple ruin that stared him in the face, but he might be saddled with a load of contingent liabilities which he could not shake off in a lifetime. Next to the immediate victims of the crisis, their professional advisers were perhaps most to be pitied. For hardly could the profits of innumerable sales recompense them for the worrying scenes they had to pass through; while the bitterest reproaches were heaped upon

their heads for advice they had lightly given and forgotten. They had little hope to hold out; and the dens of the stock-broking firms during business hours in these evil days resembled the consulting-rooms of the popular consumptive doctors, who in the course of one busy morning's work may despatch their death-sentences by the dozen.

Meanwhile in the Stock Exchange, on the other side of the way, business was going cheerily forward. Speculative selling was so far absolutely safe, for everything was tending steadily downwards. The droop, in some instances, was astounding, and men made hundreds or thousands in the scratching of a pencil. The danger to be avoided was the being "stuck" for shares that were worse than useless; for the sudden stoppages took the very people by surprise who had been laboring for them remorselessly. Many failures were inevitable, no doubt, but more were the work of villainous combinations. Bands of conspirators leagued themselves to "pepper," as it was pleasantly termed, some particular class of investments. Of course the credit associations were chiefly selected for attack, as being most susceptible to sinister influences. The Indian banks especially had a bad time of it. The Indian trade had been bad since the close of the American war, and the collapse of the ephemeral prosperity of the great East Indian cotton port had affected all who had commercial relations with it. The new banks that had been bolstered by the Bombay cotton-bales were in difficulties already, and this English crisis administered their *coup de grâce*. Then the wreckers turned their attention to the new financial establishments, which by going in wholesale for reckless promotion, had hitherto paid fabulous dividends, and seen their shares at fancy prices. They had lent out their capital to subsidiary establishments; and now all these affiliated societies were in difficulties. Picture the feelings of the family investors of the day, who had been receiving their interest regularly for a couple of years or so, at the rate of twenty per cent. or upwards, and had been counting on the future accordingly. When the shares were issued, they had received allotments for a fraction of those they had applied for, as a matter of favor, from influential friends. We can recall many cases where the allotments had been only assigned on the understanding that shares were to be held for permanent investment. The shareholders with available means,

besides, had made the most of the privilege of their preferential claims to an allotment of the scrip of subsidiary companies. So the clergymen and the widows, the half-pay officers and the maiden ladies with a few thousands for their portions, found themselves indefinitely entangled in "securities" that were practically unsalable. Then the romance of City business in its most tragic aspects was brought home to thousands of struggling households. We may fancy the palpitation of the heart and the trembling fingers with which the arrival of the post was expected in many a melancholy breakfast-room. The stockbrokers' curt letters brought little consolation, with their news from the falling markets, where quotations were often nominal. At last suspense would be relieved by a line or two in conspicuous type in the journal, announcing the collapse of a company. The Discount Association or the Financial Corporation had succumbed, and the cherished scrip, which was the symbol of the family prosperity, represented something much worse than so much waste-paper.

The excitement of suspense is bad enough; but if we wished unwary investors in speculative securities to realize the risks to which they carelessly expose themselves, we should like to impress them with the lingering torments of liquidations. If you lose a large sum of money, there is an end of it; and the healthy mind begins to recover its elasticity, or at all events learns to resign itself. But with a failure under limited liability, you are only at the beginning of the end; and the end, which may be indefinitely deferred, is involved in doubts and darkness. Except in an exceptionally bad case, like that of the City of Glasgow Bank, the first formal circulars of the official liquidators are pretty sure to minimize the misfortune, and they lighten the first despair with fallacious gleams of hope. The company was brought to a stoppage by stress of circumstances, but time is all that is needful to realize assets that are locked up. In fact, your shares still represent the reversion to a valuable property, and possibly you are encouraged to believe that time may set you all on your legs again. Anxious still, but plucking up heart, you hurry off to the City to attend the first meeting of the shareholders. Nothing can seem pleasanter than the party assembled on the platform, and your spirits begin insensibly to go up as you contemplate their serene and smiling faces. The liquidator is smiling, as he

well may, for your misfortunes have let him in for an excellent thing. The directors appear serene, because they have screwed up their courage to the sticking-place, knowing that they must make the best of awkward disclosures. While the secretary and manager smile like the liquidator,—albeit, to the close observer, their grins have something ghastly in them,—because they have an uneasy suspicion that they are unpleasantly compromised, and may have laid themselves open to civil, if not criminal, proceedings. The liquidator's exposition of the circumstances would be more satisfactory did it not deal chiefly in specious generalities, which seem odd in a man who has been bred to figures. But you cannot complain that it has no point, and the sting lurks in the peroration. It may be hoped that all will come right in the end; but in the mean time a heavy call is indispensable, "to place the company in an advantageous position for liquidation." A call! and all your money is locked up in companies that are already entered on the black-list. A call that must be paid, with the alternative of insolvency, and a certainty of pauperism or a future of privations. All your sense of independence is gone with your hopes in that unlucky speculation; and now there is nothing left you but to endure, or to appeal to the cool friendship of acquaintances. And call succeeds to call; for the first estimate of the ruined company's future was colored by the interests of those who had compromised it. It may be that the directors had disposed of the capital in flagrant contempt of the articles of association. There may be good grounds for an action for compensation against them. But even should they be worth powder and shot, no man of energy and business experience seems disposed to take a lead in the matter; for, as we said already, City men in such circumstances seem to have a kindly fellow-feeling for the gentlemen who have victimized them.

But the loss of one is the gain of another. If the confiding public were not periodically victimized, what would become of promoters and professional speculators? We have spoken of the great fortunes of such families as the Rothschilds and Barings. But side by side with these hereditary magnates of finance and commerce, we see the rise of a class of millionaire *nouveaux riches*, who have apparently for the time an even greater command of money, or who scatter it, at all events, with more ostentatious profu-

sion. Some of these unscrupulous upstarts have made themselves sufficiently conspicuous; for they are often not only cunning men of business, but they aspire to shine before society as well. Though far from hiding their light under a bushel, they do their best to keep their business secrets; and so long as all goes prosperously and their ventures turn to profit, their gold gilds the scandals of their careers, and their profusion stifles rumors to their disadvantage. But occasionally over-confidence will bring them to grief: their doings become the subject of judicial proceedings; and so we can compile a tolerably faithful biographical sketch from the impartial charge of a judge and the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses. We hear, perhaps, of an ambitious tradesman in a very small way, who recognizes that he has a happy turn for finance. He keeps a "coffee divan," and is brought into friendly relations with the clever Bohemians, invariably out at elbows, who lounge away their time in his establishment. He has "a friend" who has a little money to turn over, and he puts it out for him on bills at exorbitant interest, though generally on pretty safe personal security. His establishment is in the city, in the purview of the Stock Exchange, and some of his shady clients are hangers-on of "the house," or fifth-rate solicitors struggling for a practice. All these needy individuals have dreams of growing rich, should fortune ever give them a cast of her favors. And the chance comes in a period of inflated speculation, when doubtful companies of all kinds are shooting up like funguses, and their letters of allotment are as good as bank-notes.

Our friend of the coffee divan has his council of confederates, ready to scent out "good things," and to conspire to turn them to advantage. In picking and choosing among "rubbish" of purely ephemeral value, in deciding on the happy moment to realize, he shows himself possessed of keen financial sagacity. He gets talked of as a shrewd fellow—he forms friendships with the rather disreputable brokers he employs—till at last his advice is applied for by promoters in a small way. When he has once insinuated a finger into the City pie, the whole of both hands is sure to follow. For be it remembered that he is really gifted in his way, and no impostor as to his ability in "rigging companies;" and his self-confidence growing with a run of good luck, his counsels come to be regarded as those of an Achitophel. He casts his slough, and sells the stock

and good-will of his establishment. He comes out in garments in advance of the fashion, wears flowers in his buttonhole, and acts the *petit maitre*, though overdoing the aristocratic swagger of his manners. He gathers a good balance at his banker's; he is ready to venture with it boldly; and thenceforward his rise is assured. From being consulted by men of some character and position, he takes to getting up companies upon his own account. With the characters and connections he has made, that is by no means difficult; and he begins prudently in a modest way. He can find money for advertising and circulating prospectuses; and the investing public bear him out with the rest. Generally, there is something ingeniously plausible in the scheme,—at all events, he knows how to make a prospectus seductive, and how far he may take liberties with the public credulity. He selects his directors with judgment, so far as circumstances will admit, leavening the board of respectable dupes with a sprinkling of ready accomplices. His talents as a promoter come to be favorably regarded in speculative circles; and embarrassed members of the aristocracy who are looking out for directorships, pay him court as a promising patron. So it comes about that his enterprises develop with his opportunities. He sends safe emissaries across the ocean to draw up secret engagements, and secures concessions of undertakings, to be settled for after the shares are subscribed. He has his sumptuous offices, where a numerous staff of clerks is daily issuing prospectuses by the thousand; or he has his luxurious reception-room, where he has his interviews with schemers of his own stamp, and the jackal directors and "guinea-pigs" who act as his providers; while, on the strength of his City triumphs, he becomes a sort of lion on the outskirts of society. Men talk of the Monte-Christo-like magnificence with which he has furnished his residences in town and country. He entertains mixed-companies with vulgar ostentation, and pays hack writers in the press to chronicle his entertainments. He subscribes liberally to the advertising charities; he builds schools and restores churches; or he bestows public recreation grounds where municipalities are willing to accept them. He has been making his game, in fact, with the money of the people whom we sketched as the victims of unhappy liquidations. Perhaps the day arrives when he is brought up with a sharp turn. Reaction following inflation

has taken the wind out of his sails; his affairs are thrown into insolvency; he becomes the defender in numerous actions, brought with heavy damages by gentlemen who allege frauds, and seek to make him responsible for their losses; his establishments, with their contents, are in the hands of the auctioneers. But it is astonishing how one of these piratical navigators manages to weather the most appalling storms. He has made himself friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness; he has it in his power to make compromising disclosures; he has done his best to secure himself means of retreat; and he avails himself of the services of practitioners who are versed in all legal chicanery. As a rule, he slips through the toils that he has spread for himself, and he has hidden money out of the way in a reserve fund that eludes the perquisitions of his creditors. What is even more strange, though his character may have been torn into tatters, his reputation for financial adroitness still stands him in good stead; and before the scandals with which he is associated have been forgotten, he may be actively, though less obtrusively, engaged in business again. For it is a fact that, however a really capable promoter may have been blown upon, his services are still in request, though his name is no longer paraded.

The professional jobber and speculator on the Stock Exchange is a more commonplace character, though perhaps the qualities he should possess are even rarer. He is the last man in the world to lose his head, and he ought to be exceptionally gifted—mentally and physically. He must have a strong constitution to stand the constant wear and tear of excitement, and a strong brain to bear the perpetual strain on it. In forecasting the immediate future of a stock, he must be able to combine and analyze the circumstances that influence it. And it is scarcely necessary to add that he should have perfect self-command, and invariably assume an imperturbable countenance. Men know that he is in the habit of dealing largely, and generally to good purpose, so they keep a watch on him and his operations accordingly. Either on private information, or from the exercise of his judgment, he has decided that a certain stock should go up. If he went to the Exchange and gave his orders openly, the dealers would immediately raise the prices on him. The more eager he is, the less he shows it: he strolls quietly into the house with his hands in his pockets, drops some careless

words of depreciation here and there, and probably makes a feint of selling. When he believes he has thrown the curious off his trail, he goes in earnest about the business he has in hand. It is evident that such an operator must have few scruples; and though he may deal fairly according to his own ideas, he has his peculiar code of morality. Though possibly less lax than that of our friend the promoter, it is easy enough in all conscience. He sees no harm in circulating false intelligence, nor does it give him a twinge to think that the profits of his day represent losses he may have gratuitously inflicted on his neighbors. In fact, the anxieties of his own life must naturally tend to make him indifferent to the sorrows and misfortunes of other people; nor can we imagine a more miserable existence, from whatever point of view we regard it. He might take for his Bashi-Bazouk motto the line of Byron, "I think not of pity; I think not of fear;" his life of care never knows a holiday; and should he be fortunate enough to retire on a competency, he is as miserable without his stimulants as the reformed laudanum-drinker. But what chance in the long run, we may ask, with such cold-blooded professionals as that, has the outsider who lightly ventures into the City, to win his loose hundred or two on one lucky deal of the cards?

Look at the inevitable odds against the latter. It may be assumed that he would find no professionals to deal with him, were they not morally certain of having the best of it in the end. He has to face better information and superior equanimity of temperament; and besides, to begin with, he must pay the broker's commission, which represents the fixed profit of the City gaming-table. There are minor circumstances he is apt to ignore, but which nevertheless may tell considerably. There are periodical seasons when the markets are sluggish, and slow to respond even to a decided impulse. In the first weeks of the year, for example, it is found that business is almost always dull; men are meditating over the Christmas balance-sheets or meeting Christmas liabilities, and are slow to commit themselves to new engagements. Then bad weather notoriously depresses the markets, and the operator may be caught in a down-pour of rain, when the mud that is flying in showers from cart-wheels on the crossings disposes everybody to look at speculative prospects *en noir*. It is found in practice, moreover, that rises are for the most part very gradual, and are apt to

be arrested by slight reactions, while some "bulls" are realizing small profits. The outsider who has bought on a reliable piece of news, or on conclusions which are substantially just—a very rare case indeed—hopes, let us say, to clear five per cent. on his purchase. But he finds that though things may be tending upwards, he is likely to have long to wait, and the settling-day is approaching, when he must either close or carry over. While, on the other hand, some complication may upset his calculations; uneasiness tells far more quickly on sensitive stocks than hopeful expectation, and a fall of five or even ten per cent. is nothing uncommon. It may be said, that being the case, that the outsider would do better to go in for "bearing;" but in fact, "bearing" is altogether antagonistic to his inclinations.

So we may imagine him retracing his way from the City, having effected a bargain for £5,000 in one of those notoriously speculative railway lines, the stock of which, though essentially sound, seems to be banded about like a shuttlecock among operators. Perhaps he has acted on a happy inspiration; perhaps on a chance paragraph in a newspaper; possibly on the whispered intimation of a pushing broker, that parties behind the scenes have been buying. What objects of interest the papers become to him from that moment! How closely he scans the share-lists in each new edition! For it may be assumed that our acquisitive friend is hard up, and that the stake he is playing is of vital interest. A fractional movement upwards excites his hopes; but the stock sticks there or thereabouts till the eve of the settlement. He hardly likes to pay a commission merely for a prolonged trial of his patience, and cabs off to take advice. His broker arranges to carry over on easy terms, and he takes out a fresh lease of expectation,—when one evening his appetite for dinner is spoiled by an item of intelligence in "our latest edition." It may be the announcement of an issue of fresh stock; an unfavorable estimate of dividend, given with judicial authority; or possibly a collision is set forth in glaring type, with a melancholy report of dead and maimed. The paragraph appeared after the closing of the markets, so he has to wait for the morrow to learn results. The bulletin of the opening sales is deplorable; and the later ones, with unimportant fluctuations, are going from bad to worse. The bears, who are always sniffing at the stock, come down upon it with the full weight of their

paws, and the weak holders are alarmed. Our friend, who scarcely contemplated the chance of losses, goes through paroxysms of mental anxiety in his hesitation as to cutting them short, but finally resigns himself to a sacrifice which leaves him £300 or £400 out of pocket. Had he resources to fall back upon, he would have done better to hold on, as the effects are out of proportion to their causes; but for the moment he almost feels happy in having made up his mind to the worst—a mood which changes in a week or two, when he has the bitterness of noting the stock going up again. Being hit so hard is perhaps an extreme case, and may possibly prove a blessing in disguise if it drives the victim in disgust out of the betting-ring. If he merely burns his fingers, he has a craving to have his revenge; and when an embarrassed and excitable gentleman takes to gambling, we pity him almost as much as his family.

Speculative enterprise is one thing, and speculation in stocks is another; and the growth of both has been almost beyond calculation in the lifetime of the present generation. As to Stock Exchange dealings, it has been estimated on good authority, that barely one bargain in twenty in London is genuine; while the percentage of *bond fide* purchases on the Paris Bourse is probably even smaller. As for speculative enterprise, it necessarily expands as the world becomes richer; and the wealth of the world seeks outlets and remunerative undertakings, which increase it indefinitely when judiciously undertaken. So the one goes on reacting upon the other, and fresh centres of activity are opened everywhere. Take our own manufacturing and mining districts, for example. In prosperous times they yield a flowing volume of superfluous capital which floods the stock markets, seeking safe securities. That has been going on to such an extent of late years, notwithstanding periods of stagnation and depression, that now the stocks of the choicer railways scarcely give higher returns than consols formerly; while the funds of America and the leading Continental States have been rising till they no longer tempt the needy. So shrewd promoters have their innings periodically, competing for the employment of the plethora of capital, with schemes and concessions more or less plausible. On the solid foundation of the capital they can obtain, they rear a vast superstructure of credit that gradually becomes top-heavy. And as we already remarked, speculation

is so diffused nowadays, that its hazards are vastly increased. Formerly, a man who stood heavily committed in London might content himself with watching the storm-warnings in the City. Now, the foul weather that breeds financial cyclones may be blowing up on the other side of the Atlantic, or on one of those *bourses* of eastern Europe which are the creations of yesterday. As the activity of the volcanoes of Iceland and south Italy precluded the great earthquake of Lisbon, so the "cornering" of a Vanderbilt in New York, or the collapse of a Strousberg in Berlin and St. Petersburg, may send a panic through the London Stock Exchange, and swallow up a shoal of small speculators.

In fact, the sudden commercial activity of the eastern Continental nations is one of the most suggestive signs of the progress of the world, and it presents some remarkable phases of business romance. Not so very many years ago the greater part of Europe was still lying fallow, while the riches of the East were being leisurely *exploit  *, chiefly by nations of hereditary traders, who confined their commercial pursuits to their own groups of colonies. The Continent was like an unimproved farm, partially cultivated with primitive simplicity by men who sometimes saved but seldom ventured. The scanty surplus of produce was almost worthless for want of communications; and the use of credit was almost confined to governments that spent what precarious accommodation they could obtain on wasteful wars and the redemption of territory. The railways have changed that. People who never stirred from their homes have taken to travelling and picked up ideas. New wants have been created and new ambitions awakened, and the example of rapid money-making has proved contagious. There has been an energetic propaganda by Anglo-Saxon promoters, whose success has inspired a feverish jealousy, tempting the steady-going natives to turn speculators and take enterprise out of the hands of the foreigners. Notably our old friends the Jews have come to the front, working together, as is their habit, with the unanimity which is the characteristic of their race, and which has incited some of their Christian fellow-countrymen to fresh outbreaks of persecution. Great powers, in spite of their crushing armaments, have found means to subsidize useful public works, which have proved sufficiently remunerative to encourage them in similar

undertakings. The imposing architectural proportions of the new Bourses of Berlin and Vienna are the outward and visible signs of a financial revolution that has subverted social relations and levelled the old landmarks. Banking firms that have risen from inconsiderable beginnings, form syndicates to float promising schemes. Tradesmen whose fathers lived in dingy apartments over their unpretending shops, have pushed their connections, put plate-glass fronts to their establishments, and gone to inhabit handsome villas in the suburbs; but nevertheless find money somehow to be turned over on the Stock Exchange. Nay, the great landed nobility who used to wrap themselves in the pride of their caste, leaving the management of their properties to land-stewards and "mayors of the household," no longer stand aloof from the vulgarity of traffic. Princes and archdukes have set the example of either transferring great stretches of country to land societies; or granting concessions of their forests and mines on condition of heavy "fines" and handsome royalties; or they have invested largely in the appliances of modern machinery, and become miners or manufacturers, stock-breeders or vine-growers, on a scale that reminds one of west-American enterprises.

The *boursiers* began by encouraging the citizens to reconstruct their cities; and in fact it is in urban building operations that speculation has had its wildest swing. The stirring of the dry bones has been universal. Flourishing seaports, from Hamburg to Trieste, have received a vast accession of trade, because the volume of imports and exports from the interior has been swelling steadily. Decayed Imperial cities, like Nuremberg, are resuming the activity that enriched them in the Middle Ages, and breaking through the picturesque girdle of their venerable walls, to the intense disgust of artists and antiquarians. Swampy tracts of the Hungarian plains, where herds of cattle and horses used to run wild, are smiling, year after year, with golden harvests; while the sheds on the quays of towns on the Danube are stacked with the agricultural machinery of our Howards and Fowlers. For even backward states, like Roumania, have not only entered on the race, but are already outstripping more powerful competitors. Yet this sudden awakening to activity has its dangers. Nations that had been in the habit of hoarding and looking closely to each shilling they spent, appreciate the excitement of easy

money-getting, and are becoming dependent on unfamiliar luxuries. But they are nervous as ever about their savings, though they speculate freely, and a serious check will bring a severe revulsion at any moment. The great *krach* of Vienna, during the Exhibition year, shows how lightly even the comparatively sober Austrians become excited. We chanced to be in the Kaiserstadt at the time, and we shall never forget the abject panic that prevailed. Doubtless a great deal of risky business had been done, and the collapse of inflated stocks was inevitable. But the depreciation of intrinsically valuable building property and of solid land securities, was out of all proportion to the causes affecting them; while the credulity which took the wildest falsehoods for gospel, was simply inconceivable. And now Vienna and Berlin, even Constantinople and Cairo, are in the closest speculative relations with London and Paris, — a truth which cannot be too often repeated for the warning of our home investors. As for the present rage for financial speculation in France, which is said to be sending many lunatics each settling-day to the Paris and Lyons asylums, we should hope that English eyes are open to its risks, as we believe it is carried on with foreign capital.

The Old World has been making marvellous progress, and rival nations running each other hard, have been amassing fortunes undreamt of by their fathers; but the United States of America are, after all, the stage for dramatic business *par excellence*. They boast the broadest field, the biggest capitalists, and the boldest ventures. There would seem to be something in the climate and soil that breeds a certain quick-sighted daring, which is nevertheless tempered by caution and shrewdness. While not a few are attaining to enormous wealth, while many are making splendid competencies, multitudes are continually being ruined and beginning again, for hope springs eternally out of disappointments and misfortunes, nor is anybody inclined to resign himself to failure. The average American seems to turn to business as Charles Fox betook himself to the hazard-table. Making money is the greatest pleasure in life, but next to winning comes the excitement of losing. In fact, the Americans are perpetually playing at games of chance; from the agricultural pioneer who shifts westward from farm to farm, selling each successive holding in a vague notion of bettering himself; from the

miner who goes prospecting for the precious metals in the wild solitudes of the western territories, to the tradesman who starts his dry-goods store on credit, and the professional man who stakes his savings in railway stocks. Nowhere does money change hands more quickly; nowhere is retail trade brisker in good times; nowhere does any plausible schemer or inventor so easily find backers with dollars in their pockets. An American who has "made his pile" hedges against future ill-luck while making free with his capital. Should all continue to go well, he lives in luxury and dies respected as a "cute" capitalist. Should his hopes prove fallacious and his business speculations unfortunate, he has the satisfaction of having had his fling and the zest of recommencing an animated struggle. Nay, even the ladies of go-ahead Chicago, as we see by the journals of that city, have left the parks and the ball-rooms to go upon the corn exchange, and have taken to gambling heavily in grain, which may or may not prove profitable to their husbands. While those magnates of finance who tower above the mass, have attained to the acme of financial enjoyment. They stand together in groups and "rings," intriguing and forming alliances, to monopolize the control of vast national undertakings, which fluctuate according to the results of their combinations. In fact they are the men who hold the national hazard-banks against all comers. And whatever may be the changing fortunes of individuals, the great tide of prosperity flows and swells, thanks to the inexhaustible natural resources of the mighty watershed it drains.

But, notwithstanding all the marvels of modern enterprise, the most sensational chapters of American commercial history were the earliest, and relate to the rivalry of Englishmen with the natives of the States. The name of Jacob Astor, the father of American millionaires, associates itself naturally with the fur trade; and we know nothing more thrilling in historical fiction than the lives of the trappers and *voyageurs* of the fur companies. When the greater part of the northern continent was an unreclaimed game-preserve, stretching from the icebergs that skirt Alaska and Rupert's Land to the waterless deserts in the old Spanish province of New Mexico; when the strength of the savage Indian tribes was still unbroken as the countless herds of buffalo were scarcely diminished, — the Indian

trader of those lawless days literally carried his life in his hand, as he tracked his way into the pathless wilderness, laden with such seductive treasures as powder and fire-water. He risked his scalp on the doubtful guarantee of the self-interest of the "friendly" Indians he hoped to deal with. Yet the trader, though his scalp might be "raised" at any moment, at least made his journeys in comparative comfort. But the trapper had to skulk like the beasts he hunted, in a country swarming with hostile savages, who always kept their eyes "skinned" in search of "sign." Scalps at any time had an irresistible attraction for the wandering braves; and, moreover, they naturally gave no quarter to the intruders who scared the game from their hunting-grounds. So when some little knot of trappers was caught and "cornered," there was nothing for it but to sell their lives dearly. The chance of death had few terrors for them. But whether game was abundant or plentiful they still might have to endure terrible privations, for when they knew the red men were around them on the war-path, they dared neither discharge a rifle nor kindle a fire. They followed the fur-bearing animals like the sleuth-hound, and though they never neglected immediate precautions, no fear of consequences stopped their advance. They committed themselves on brawling torrents flowing into unexplored wildernesses, to the frail canoes they constructed of birch-bark, and were swept down between walls of precipices and past coverts that might be alive with lurking enemies, to the rapids that sucked them towards plunging cataracts. Farther to the north, or in the depths of the winter, they had to endure such terrible extremes of cold, that even these men of iron often succumbed. Nor was it only with the savages and the elements they had to contend. Competing companies of merchants and respectable investors winked at the ruthless warfare of the people in their service, if they did not positively encourage it. It might have been supposed that the lonely white stragglers meeting in these inhospitable wastes, would have readily lent each other help and sympathy. Not a bit of it. In the territory of the United States, the American Fur Company and the Rocky Mountain Company—in the British Dominions, the Hudson Bay Company and the Northwestern Company—perpetually carried on a remorseless warfare, subsidizing, for one side and the other, the tomahawks

and scalping-knives of the tribes. In these circumstances the trading-posts of the companies, dotted over the wilds, and isolated in the winter by hundreds of leagues of frozen snow-fields, were comparatively luxurious havens of refuge. Yet even in these, mere handfuls of roughly armed whites had to garrison imperfectly stockaded wooden shanties against mobs of savages, who, when they were brought together for the sake of trade, were maddened as a preliminary with drugged whiskey. So there was hardly a fur robe in the palmy days of the fur trade, but was stained with the blood of the trappers who had toiled for it; hardly a beaver hat or bonnet that might not have bristled with the memories of some desperate mountain fight or hair-breadth 'scape.

The history of the United States is emphatically that of a trading people. Other nations have emerged slowly into wealth and prosperity through ages of war, waste, and ignorance, and in spite of the prejudices, indifference, or discouragements of the aristocratic castes that governed them. The Spaniards, who proceeded our English emigrants in the New World, were a race of conquerors—literally men of blood and iron—who sacrificed their new subjects to their lust for silver, and left only garrisons behind them in their territories. The French settlers in Canada and on the Mississippi had few of the qualities of successful colonists, had the fortunes of war not gone against them. But the pilgrim fathers, and even the cavaliers who turned planters in the Southern States, carried mercantile and industrial aptitudes with them as the most valuable part of their freight. They found the grandest openings ever offered to agriculture and commerce, in an unlimited expanse of fertile soil, with every variety of genial climate. They had magnificent harbors, with an unrivalled network of water communications, that brought each fresh bit of country they broke up into cheap connection with their seaports. They had only to contend with wild animals and roaming tribes of savages, who could offer no appreciable resistance to their advance, and who were inevitably doomed to slow extermination. And when once they had fairly organized themselves together for their *élan*, their progress was as rapid as irresistible. Recruits swelled their hosts from the commercial nations of Europe; and the energy of the Englishman was backed up by the stolid resolution of the Dutchman, and the

perseverance of the frugal German. Ireland has sent them legions of sturdy arms, though the mass of Irishmen there, as at home, seem destined to do the rough drudgery of the community. But the result of that blending of blood and races has been a people of feverishly earnest temperament, working with the restless force of a high-pressure engine, abounding in ideas they are bent on realizing, grappling with the difficulties they are determined to vanquish, carrying business into their brief hours of relaxation, and making money one way or another, in season and out of season. Never has a nation lived faster in every sense; and their very distractions take the form of speculations and business enterprise. The lives of the careworn men who scramble through their meals, who pass their moments of conviviality standing up at refreshment bars, who sleep night after night in the railway or on the steamboat, travelling thousands of miles with nothing but a hand-valise, is typical of their pregnant national history. They can boast of no venerable associations, but already the country is one vast World's Fair, exhibiting on the grandest scale and in infinite variety the whole broad range of modern invention. Already the "New" England States, offshoots almost of yesterday from our Puritan England, have fallen behind in the race of enterprise, and are comparatively overcrowded. Already the town of San Francisco, whose "Golden Gate" was only yesterday an outlying postern, giving admission to the wildernesses and back settlements of the Union, has assumed such imposing proportions, and admits such a flood of traffic and population, that it seems likely to dispute with the Empire City the claim to be the principal entrance to the country. The rival railway lines, running parallel across the continent, are fast obliterating the picturesque memorials of the wild Western society of the last generation. Not a dozen years ago the railway bridges had to be picketed by pairs of armed watchers, who earned inadequate wages on the understanding that their scalps might adorn an Indian wigwam. It was nothing unusual for a through-train to Truckee or Omaha to be brought to a standstill by a stampede of buffaloes. Now the last of the Sioux or Cheyennes have been relegated to their reserves, or lounge about the stations in the last stage of moral dilapidation, ready to lend the palefaces a hand with their luggage. The buffaloes have been wantonly massacred for their

robes, and have retreated behind the Red River or to the confines of Texas and New Mexico. The Smoky Forks, famous in frontier warfare, are dotted over with farms and thriving townships; while the "Bloody Creeks," so named from the massacres of mountain men, are moorings for fleets of canal-boats and grain-barges.

The scope that is offered to financial and industrial ambitions in developing and manipulating the resources of such a continent, with its inexhaustible water-power, is practically unlimited. How quickly may money be turned over, and how general must be the diffusion of wealth, when a cluster of wooden shanties in some favored situation springs into a town in the course of a year or two, and grows by geometrical progression from a town to a great city! Steady men are placed in comfortable circumstances by ordinary industry or by the natural advance of legitimate investments. They buy land or building-sites, and bide their time, till the price goes up with the spread of population, in the mean while raising money upon mortgage, which they turn to profitable account. Others with keener brains seize on one of the chances that are always presenting themselves in a new country, and originate some local industry that is the making of a neighborhood, and yields fabulous returns. While others, again, who are pronounced still more fortunate, hit off a vein of silver, discover a coal-field or a copper-mine, or strike petroleum, probably selling the concession for millions of dollars to a company who can find the capital for gigantic works. What with the extraordinary impulse given to joint-stock enterprise; with the growth of the grain trade, the cattle trade, the pork trade—which not only supply fifty millions of home consumers, but flood the foreign markets; what with the constant construction of railways and other indispensable works,—a class of men have come into existence who are leviathan speculators *par excellence*. They have no fancy for locking up their money in land. They have no temptation to turn their attention to politics, except in so far as controlling the legislatures may serve their purposes. They have no ambition even to found a family, for those who come after them may take care of themselves, which generally they are very well able to do. They have, for the most part, few personal wants, and no extravagant tastes; and even their lavish expenditure, which has

usually a practical object, bears an infinitesimal proportion to their fluctuating incomes. The one pleasure of their existence is making successful hits, and, to do them justice, they care less for the stakes than the excitement of playing for them. They have their friendships of convenience, and their bitter feuds, like those mediæval barons who were always at daggers drawn. They have their trusted retainers, too, and their troops of dependants, who hold stock by their favor or in their name, and back them up at the board meetings. And, like the feudal barons, they are unscrupulous enough in their dealings, though they may have their peculiar notions of chivalry and honor. So the Vanderbilts and the Drews and the Jay Goulds, with many others whose names have been less familiarly known in England, using the spare millions which are really of little use to them except as counters, give a strange zest to their feverish lives, by devising combinations to the discomfiture of their opponents. Sometimes the war is waged openly, as when a concerted attack is opened on some combination of lines which has been appreciated by a group of rival capitalists. Or the snares are laid with such skill, that even a "long-headed" ring plunges headlong into them; and then the question is, whether they be strong enough to hold the victims. Only the other day a daring conspiracy of outsiders caught the knowing ones, almost without exception. An incident of this kind is of rare occurrence, and says more for the courage of the plotters than for their wisdom, unless they are satisfied with the *coup* they have made, and take their leave of Wall Street with their profits. The men who were victimized accepted the defeat with characteristic stoicism, saying as little as possible as to the extent of their losses. But, sooner or later, they are sure to take their revenge; and indeed it would be contrary to all the principles of successful operations, if so unparalleled a piece of audacity went unpunished.

Within the limits of an article, we can but cursorily indicate what might be matter, as we said, for a most entertaining work. Nor would it be an anti-climax, even after allusion to the gigantic speculations and colossal enterprises of the American continent, to end, as we began, with a reference to the life-romances of the humble business folk who are toiling to keep body and soul together. For only genius with dramatic gifts of description could do sympathetic justice to the

struggles that are sustained from day to day, and unbrightened by a gleam of either hope or excitement.

From Good Words.

LADY JANE.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER IV.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

THAT morning, Winton went with his heart beating, to Grosvenor Square. He was not overawed by the stately stillness of the place, the imposing dim vacancy of the suite of rooms through which he was led to the duchess's boudoir. He had a fine house himself, and everything handsome about him, and he did not feel that Lady Jane would make any marked descent either in comfort or luxury should she abandon these gilded halls for his. To tell the truth he thought the gilding was overdone, not to say a little tarnished and in questionable taste, but that was the fault of the time in which it was executed. He was so little alarmed that he could notice all this. He had seen those rooms before only in the evening, when they were full of company, and looked very different from now, when they lay, in the freshness of the morning, all empty and silent, the windows open, and the sunblinds down, and nobody visible. Naturally the lover looked, as he passed through the apartment in which his lady lived, for some trace of her habitual occupation. Was that hers, that little chair by the window, the table with work on it, and some books, and a single rose in a glass? He would have taken the rose on the chance, if that solemn personage in front of him had not kept within arm's length. There was a portrait of her on the wall, but it did not, of course, do her justice, indeed was an unworthy daub, as anybody could see. Thus he stepped through one room after another, treading on air, his heart beating, not with apprehension, but with soft excitement and happiness. She should have a better lodging than this, rooms decorated expressly for her, pictures of a very different kind; her home should be worthy of her, if any mortal habitation could ever be worthy of such a beautiful soul. In his progress across the ante-room and the two great drawing-rooms, all this went through his mind. Thoughts go so quick-

ly. He even arranged the pictures, selected with lightning speed what would suit her best, decided that a Raphael—it must be a Raphael—should hang upon the walls of the shrine in which his saint was to be specially set; while he walked on, glancing with a half-smile of contempt at the Duke of Billingsgate, K.G., in his peer's robes, on one side, and a duchess-dowager in a turban, on the other. Good heavens, to think of such hideous daubs surrounding Jane! But in the new home all should be altered. His heart had palpitated with anxiety yesterday before he knew how she would receive his suit—but to-day! To-day he had no anxiety at all, only an eager desire to get the preliminaries over, and to see her, and make her decide when it was to be. There was no reason why they should wait. He was not a young barrister (as he might have been but for that uncle—bless him!—whose goodness he had never duly appreciated till now) waiting for an income. He was rich, and ready to sign the settlements to-morrow. At the end of the season, just long enough to be clear of St. George's, and make sure of a pretty, quiet country church to be married in, time enough by turning half the best workmen in London into it, and devoting himself to bric-a-brac with all his energies, to turn his little house at Winton into a lady's bower. What more was wanted? He had everything arranged in his mind before the groom of the chambers, entering on noiseless feet, and with a voice like velvet, informed her Grace that "Mr. Winton" was about to enter. The duchess received him with benignity just terminated with stateliness. She had never, he thought, been so beautiful as Jane. Perhaps in the majority of cases it is difficult to believe that a woman of fifty has been as beautiful as her daughter of twenty-five. And it was true enough in this case. But nobody could deny that she had a face full of fine sense and feeling. It looked somewhat troubled as well as very serious to-day. Winton, however, was ready to allow that his gain would be this lady's loss, and that perhaps the duchess was not so anxious to get rid of her only daughter as parents generally are understood to be.

"Sit down, Mr. Winton," she said. She had not risen from her own chair, but sat behind her writing-table, which was laden with papers, and across this barrier held out her hand to him, and gave him a benign but somewhat distant smile. "I ought to apologize," she added after a

moment, "for giving you the trouble of coming to me."

"The trouble! but it is my business. I should have asked to see the duke if you had not so kindly given me this opportunity—first. I hope I may speak to the duke afterwards if I have the happiness to satisfy you. You may be sure I can think of nothing else till this is all settled."

"All settled?" she said with a little shake of her head. "You are young and confident, Mr. Winton; you think things settle themselves so easily as this. But I fear the preliminaries will be more lengthened than you suppose. Do you know, I wish very much you had consulted me before speaking to Jane."

"Why?" he asked, fixing his eyes upon her with an astonished gaze. Then he added, "I know Lady Jane is a great lady, a princess royal. She is like that. I am a little democratic myself, but I acknowledge in her everything that is beautiful in rank. She should be approached like a crowned head."

"Not quite that perhaps," said the duchess, smiling.

"With every observance, every ceremony—but then," he added, "that is not the English fashion, you know, to ask others first. One thinks of her, herself as the only judge."

The duchess continued to shake her head. "That is all very well with ordinary girls, but Jane's position is so exceptional. Mr. Winton, I hope you will not be disappointed or annoyed by what I tell you. Had you asked me I should have said to you, 'No.'"

"No!" he repeated vaguely, looking into her face. He could not even realize what her meaning was.

"I should have said, 'Don't do it, Mr. Winton, for your own sake.'"

Winton rose up in the excitement of the moment and stood before her like a man petrified. "Don't do it! Do you mean— Pardon me if I am slow of understanding."

"I mean, seeing it had unfortunately come about that, without being able to help it, you had fallen in love with Jane—"

"Unfortunately!"

"You do nothing but repeat my words," the duchess cried in a plaintive tone. "It is unfortunately—but hear me out first. If you had spoken to me I should have said, 'Try and get over it, Mr. Winton; don't disturb her, poor girl, by telling her. Try if a little trip to America, or tiger-

shooting, or to be a *Times* correspondent, or some other of those exciting things which you young men do nowadays, will not cure you.' I should have said, 'You have not known her very long, it cannot have gone very deep.' I tell you this to show you what my advice would have been had you asked me before speaking to Jane."

"But it is of no use speculating upon what we should have done in an imaginary case," said Winton. He had awoke from his first bewilderment, and began to understand vaguely that everything was not going to be easy for him as he had once thought. "You see I *have* spoken to her," he said. "You frighten me horribly; but then it is of no use considering what you would have done in a totally different case."

The duchess sighed and shook her head. "That is what I should have thought it my duty to say, in view of all the pain and confusion that are sure to follow. Do you know, Mr. Winton, that her father will never listen to you—never!" she said with a sudden change of tone.

Winton dropped upon his chair again and stared at her with an anxious countenance. "I know—I was told, that the duke would not be easy to please. And quite right! I agree with his Grace. I am not half good enough for her; but, then," he added after a pause, "nobody is. If there is one man in the world as worthy as she is, neither the duke nor any one knows where to find him; and then," he continued in tones more insinuating still, "it would not matter now. If that hero were found to-morrow she would not have him, for—she has chosen me! I allow that it is the most wonderful thing in the world!" said the lover in a rapture which became him; "but you will find it is true. She has chosen me!"

"It may be very true," said the duchess, shaking her head more and more, "but the duke will not pay much attention to that. I am afraid it is not moral excellence he is thinking of. It would be hard, I allow, to find anybody as good as Jane. Probably if we did he would turn out to be some poor old missionary or quite impossible person. I am afraid that is not at all what her father is thinking of."

"Then tell me what it is. I am not Prince Charming—but the Wintons have been settled at Winton since Queen Elizabeth's time, and I am very well off. The settlements should be—whatever you wish."

"Don't promise too much," said the duchess with a smile, "for no doubt you have got a family lawyer who will be of a very different opinion; indeed, I hope you have, if that is your way of doing business. But, alas! the duke will not be satisfied, I fear, even with that."

"Then what in the name of heaven!—I beg you a thousand pardons, duchess. I don't know what I am saying. I have no title, to be sure. Is it a title that is necessary?"

"I can't tell you what is necessary," said the duchess with a tone of impatience. "The duke is—well, the duke is her father; that is all that is to be said. He will never listen to your proposal—never! That is why I should have said to you, don't make it. Leave her in her tranquillity, poor girl."

"But"—Winton cried. He did not know what more to say—a protest of all his being, that was the only thing of which he was capable.

"But"—the duchess repeated. "Yes, Mr. Winton, there is always a but. To tell the truth, I am not so very sorry that you did not ask me after all. I should have been obliged to tell you what I have now told you. But since you have taken it into your own hands I am rather glad. If her father had his way Jane would never be married at all. Oh, don't be so enthusiastic; don't thank me so warmly! I have done nothing for you, and I don't know what I can do for you."

"Everything!" said Winton. "With you to back us it is impossible that anything can prevail against us. The duke's heart will melt; he will hear reason."

A faintly satirical smile came upon the mouth of the duke's wife, who knew better than anybody how much was practicable in the way of making him hear reason. But she did not say anything. She let the lover talk. He went on with the conviction natural to his generation—that all these mediæval prejudices were fictitious, and paternal tyranny a thing of the past.

"Cruel fathers," said Winton, "are things of the Middle Ages. I am not afraid of them any more than I am of the Castle Spectre. The duke will rightly think that I am a poor sort of a fellow to ask his daughter from him. I ought to have been something very different—better, handsomer, cleverer."

"You are not at all amiss, Mr. Winton," said the duchess with a gracious smile.

He made her a bow of acknowledgment, and his gratification was great, for

who does not like to be told that he is considered a fine fellow? but he went on. "All this I feel quite as much as his Grace can do. The thing in my favor is that Jane" — the color flew over his face as he called her so, and her mother, though she started slightly, acknowledged his rights by a little bow of assent, somewhat solemnly made, "that Jane" — he went on repeating the sweet monosyllable, "does not mind my inferiority — is satisfied, the darling" — here his happiness got into his voice as if it had been tears, and choked him. The duchess bent her head again.

"To me that is everything," she said.

"How could it be otherwise?" cried the young man; "it *is* everything. I have no standing-ground, of course, of my own; but Jane — loves me! It is far too good to be true, and yet it is true. The duke will not like it, let us allow; but when he sees that, and that she will not give up, but be faithful — faithful to the end of our lives — Dear duchess, I have the greatest veneration for your Grace's judgment, but in this point one must go by reason. Life is not a melodrama. So long as the daughter is firm the father must yield."

He gave forth this dogma with a little excitement, almost with a peremptory tone, smiling a little in spite of himself at the tradition in which even this most sensible of duchesses believed. Perhaps a great lady of that elevated description is more liable than others to believe that the current of events and the progress of opinion have little or no effect upon the race, and that dukes and fathers are still what they were in the fifteenth century. He, this fine production of the nineteenth, was so certain of his opinion that he could not feel anything but a smiling indulgence for hers. On the other side, the duchess was more tolerant even than Winton. His certainty gave her a faint amusement — his gentle disdain of her a lively sense of ridicule; but this was softened by her sympathy for him, and profound and tender interest in the man whom Jane loved. She was a little astonished, indeed — as what parent is not? — that Jane should have loved this man precisely, and no other; but as the event called forth all her affection for her woman-child, it threw also a beautifying reflection upon Jane's lover. On the whole she was satisfied with his demeanor personally. It is not every man who will show his sentiments in a way which satisfies an anxious mother. The duchess, however, was pleased

with Winton. His look and tone when he spoke of her daughter satisfied her. He was fond enough, adoring enough, reverential enough to content her; and how much this was to say!

"Well," she said, "we will hope you may be right, Mr. Winton. You know men and human nature, no doubt, better than I do, who am only about twice your age," she added with a soft little laugh. "Anyhow, I wish with my whole heart that you may prove to be right. The only thing is, that it will be prudent not to speak to the duke now. Don't cry out — I know I am right in this. In town he is never quite happy; there are many things that rub him the wrong way. He sees men advanced whom he thinks unworthy of it, and others left out. And he thinks society is out of joint, and cannot quite divest himself of the idea that he, or rather we, were born to set it right." All this the duchess said with a little half-sigh between the sentences, and yet a faint sense of humor, which gave a light to her countenance. "But in the country things go better. If he is ever to be moved, as you say, by love and faithfulness, and such beautiful things, it will be in his own kingdom, where nobody thwarts him and he has everything his own way."

Winton's countenance fell at every word. What! he who had come hither with the intention of persuading Jane to decide when *it* should be, was he to go away without a word, — to be hung up indefinitely, to be no farther advanced than yesterday? His whole heart cried out against it, and his pride and all that was in him. He grew faint, he grew sick with anger, and disappointment, and dismay. "That means," he said, "complete postponement; that means endless suspense. I think you want me to give up altogether; you want to crush the life out of us altogether!"

"Of course you will be unjust," said the duchess, "I was prepared for that; and ungrateful. I am advising what is best for you. The duke, I believe, is in the library. He is the pink of politeness; he will see you at once, I feel sure, if you ask for an interview; but in that case you will never darken these doors again. You will be shut out from all intercourse with Jane. The whole matter will be ended as abruptly and conclusively as possible. I know my husband; you will not have time to say a word for yourself. You can take what course you think best, Mr. Winton. What I say to you is for your good; and in the mean time, if you do as I wish,

everything that I can do for you I will do."

The young man sat and listened to these words in mingled exasperation and dismay. As she spoke of the duke in his library, Winton's heart jumped up and began to thump against his side. Oh, yes, it might be decided fast enough. Evidently he could have an answer without fail or suspense on the spot. He sat and gazed at her blankly in such a dilemma as he had never known before. What would Jane think of him if he submitted? What would she say if he insisted, and got only failure and prohibition for his pains? The duchess, it was evident, was not speaking lightly. She knew what she was talking about. She wished him well, too well to let him go on to his destruction. But, on the other hand, there was the postponement of all his hopes, a sickening pause and uncertainty, a blank quenching of expectation. He could do nothing but stare at the duchess while she spoke, and for some time after. What was he to answer her? How calmly these old people sit on their height of experience, and look down half smiling upon the frets and agitation of the young ones! What was it to her that he—even that Jane, who naturally was of far more importance—should suffer all these pangs of suspense? Probably she would smile, and say that life was long, and what did it matter for a month or two? A month or two! It would be like a century or two to them. Sometimes Winton resolved that he would not be silenced; that he would go and have it out with the duke, who, after all, was Jane's father, and could not wish his child to be unhappy. And then again, as she went on laying the alternative before him, his heart would fail him. He changed his mind a hundred times while she was speaking, and after she had ended still gazed on her, with his heart in his mouth.

"I don't wish," he said at last, "to do anything rash. I will submit to anything rather than run any risks. But how are we to bear the delay? How am I to bear it? and it will be deception as well! I don't see how I am to do it. Do you mean me to give her up all the time—go tiger-shooting, as you were good enough to suggest?"

"Well,—there would be no harm in that," said the duchess, with a smile; "but I did not suggest it in the present circumstances, I said if you had spoken to me first. I ask you to wait a month—perhaps two" (this addition, made as it

seemed in *gaieté du cœur*, with rather a pleasant sense of the exasperation it would produce in him, called forth a muttered exclamation, a groan from the victim) "or perhaps two, at the most," the duchess repeated; "whereas tiger-shooting would take six, at least. But Mr. Winton, I repeat, I force you to nothing. There is the bell, and the duke is in the library. Ring it, if you will, and ask him to see you; he will not refuse."

Winton rose slowly, and went towards the bell. But he had not the courage to take this extreme step. "I suppose I may see her sometimes?" he said; "but it will be a kind of treachery."

"Her mother does not object; the case is an extreme one," said the duchess, though she blushed a little at her own sophistry. "What he does not know will not do him any harm."

"It will be deception," said Winton, shaking his head, and he made another step towards the bell. Then he turned back again. "How often may I see her? If we take your way you will not be hard upon us?" he said.

"But it will be deception," said the duchess solemnly.

"I know that; that is what revolts me. Still, as you say, what he does not know will not do him any harm."

The duchess laughed, and then she grew grave suddenly. "Mr. Winton, I feel as if I were betraying my husband; but at the present moment my child has the first claim upon me. It is her happiness that is at stake. I will not prevent you from meeting—you are both old enough to know your own minds. I will do nothing to put off Jane from a woman's natural career. It is doing evil, perhaps, that good may come; but we must risk it. Come here, but not too often: I will take the responsibility; and when we go to Billings, Lady Germaine will invite you, and you can try your fortune then. I will prepare the way as much as I can. I don't give you great hopes when all is done," she said, shaking her head.

"And after?" said Winton, turning once more with a kind of desperation towards the bell.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," said the duchess piously.

But oh, the difference when he walked out crestfallen through all the big drawing-rooms! Not a word about when it was to be. No sort of arrangement, consultation, possible. Everything had seemed so near when he came—so near that he could almost touch it. Now

everything had been pushed far off into the vague. He had seen Jane indeed, but in her mother's presence, which made her happy enough, but him only partly happy. Was this how it was to be? The duchess indeed was writing at her table, taking no notice of them. But still it was very different from what he had hoped. He did not perceive the bad pictures or the over-gilding as he went away. The place looked like a prison to him, and was dark and stifling. Lady Jane indeed accompanied him through the rooms. She gave him the rose which he had thought of stealing as he came, and told him all their engagements for a week in advance. "You will be sure to go wherever we are going," she said, and called him Reginald with a blush and a tone of sweetness that went straight to his heart. But nevertheless his disappointment, he thought, was almost more than he could bear.

CHAPTER V.

THE ANTICIPATIONS OF LADY JANE.

LADY JANE, it will easily be understood, did not look upon the matter at all from the same point of view. A girl, however much she may be in love, is seldom anxious for a peremptory marriage such as — when there is no great sacrifice involved — suits the bolder sex. She loves to play with her happiness, to prolong the sweet time when, without any violent breach of other habits, even any change of name, she can enjoy the added glory of this crown of life. She accompanied Winton through the great silent rooms, with a sense of perfect, quiet happiness which was exactly in accordance with the summer morning — the fresh, soft air in which there was no sunshine, but a flood of subdued light, and in which every sound had a tone of enchantment, though not music. It suited her gentle nature to dwell in such an atmosphere of delicate delight, which had no fact to vulgarize it, but only an ecstasy of feeling. She was disappointed to find that he was less satisfied, less happy. And he would have been angry to see that she was so happy. Such are the differences between those most near to each other. He kissed the rosebud and her hands, as with a sense of daring beyond words, she put it into his coat; but he wanted something more. Yes, he could have been angry with her; he felt a desire to say something brutal. "How can you be satisfied to deceive your father?" he asked. "It will be clandestine —" He had the cruelty to

say this, though next moment he was horrified, and begged her pardon, metaphorically on his knees.

"Clandestine!" she said, with a little surprise — she made allowance for a man's rough way of speaking — "oh, no; my father has never entered into all the circumstances. So long as my mother approves —"

"But," Winton cried, in his ferocity, "suppose he refuses his consent at last, as the duchess thinks, will you venture to oppose him then, or will you send me away?"

"Ah, never that!" said Lady Jane, looking at him with her soft eyes. They were not brilliant eyes, but when she looked at him there came over them a certain liquid light, a melting radiance such as no words could describe. The light was love, and may be seen glorifying many an unremarkable orb. It made hers so exquisite that they dazzled the beholder, especially the happy beholder who knew this was for him. But he was not satisfied even with that.

"Suppose," he went on, "that the duke were to open that door and walk in now — as he has a good right to do into his own drawing-room — what would come of it? Would you take your hand out of mine, and bid me good-bye like a stranger?"

Her hand indeed slid out of his at the suggestion, and a little tremor ran through her frame; but the next moment she raised her head and put her hand lightly within his arm. "If you think I am without courage!" she said — then added with a smile, "when it is necessary; but at present it is not necessary."

"Then you will not, whatever happens, give me up? — not even if the foundations of the earth are shaken, not even if the duke says no?" he cried, partly furious, partly satirical, catching at the hand which was on his arm.

His violence gave her a little shock, and the savage satire of the tone in which he named her father distressed Lady Jane. "You must not speak so," she said, with her soft dignity; "the duke is my father. But you do not know me if you think that anything will change me." Then indeed Winton felt a little ashamed of himself, and began to realize that he did not yet know all of this gentle creature who was going to be his wife. She parted with him at the door of the ante-room, and went back through her mother's boudoir to her own retirement. Next to being with the *objet aimé*, being alone is the

purest happiness at this stage. She kissed her mother, who was busy at her writing-table, in passing. The duchess was deep in calculation, not how she should make her ends meet, which was impossible, but how near she could draw them together, so that the gap might be small. It is a sad and harassing business. She paused only a moment to pat her child on her soft cheek, and reflect within herself how beautifying was this love which in youth is full of enchantment and illusion, and then returned to her figures. When the ends will meet, what pleasure there is even in the pain of drawing them together! but when no miracle will do this, when there must always remain a horrible chasm between! Fifty remained thus at work in the finance department, while twenty-five went lightly away to think over her happiness. It must be allowed that Lady Jane was not quite young enough—she ought to have been but twenty, by rights; but her maturity only added to the exceeding fullness of her enjoyment. There is something sweet in being awakened late; it prolongs the morning, it keeps the "vision splendid" a little longer in one's eyes. The unfulfilled even has a glory of its own, which people who are bigoted in belief of the ordinary canons of romance are slow to perceive. This preserved to Lady Jane, at an age when girlhood is over, its most perfect fragrance and charm.

Presently, however, the sweet vagueness of her anticipations began to open into other thoughts. She had been so preserved by her stately up-bringing and the traditions which she had felt to centre in her, from knowledge of fact and the world, that she knew little at all about money, or the power it has to bridge over social differences. When she allowed her heart to go out to Reginald Winton, she did so with the most absolute conviction that it involved a great descent in rank and abandonment of luxury. She would have to put off the coronet from her head she believed, the princess royal's myrtle crown. She would have to learn a great many things, both to do and to do without. She had heard of Winton House, which was a small place: and probably she had heard of the house in town. But the latter had altogether dropped out of her mind, and she knew very well that a squire's little manor would be very different from Billings, and would require from its mistress an existence of a kind unknown to all her previous experiences. She would have to superintend her own

household; if not to make her maids spin, according to the usage of old times, at least to direct the housemaids, and know how things ought to be done. Though her father was in reality much less rich than the man whom she had chosen for her husband, she was entirely in the dark on this point, and her mind awoke to a sense of a hundred requirements of which she knew nothing. She had been like a star, and dwelt apart (if it is not profane to apply such words to a young lady of the nineteenth century) as much as any poet. But now love and duty bade her come down from these heights, and learn how people walk along the common ways. She addressed herself to this task without a grudge, with glad alacrity and readiness; but she was a little puzzled, it must be admitted, to know how to begin. The first person to whom she addressed herself (for naturally Lady Jane was shy of betraying her motive, or letting it be known that the inquiries she made were for her own benefit) was her maid, who was as superior a young person and as much like a waiting gentlewoman as it was possible to find. Lady Jane was aware, of course, that Arabella's family (for this was the distinguished name she bore) were not in the same position as Mr. Winton. But in that sad deficiency of perspective which we have already noted as one of the drawbacks of rank, she felt it possible that Arabella's knowledge of how life was conducted at her end of the social circle would be more useful than her own to Reginald Winton's wife. She opened the subject in, it must be avowed, a very uncompromising and artless way, one evening, while Arabella stood behind her, partially visible in the large mirror before which she sat, brushing out her long and abundant hair. It was very fine and silky, and made very little appearance when smoothly wound round the back of her head; but when it was being brushed out it was like a veil, soft and dreamy and illimitable, spreading out almost as far as the operator chose in a cloud of soft darkness—"like twilight, too, her dusky hair." A lady's maid is very much wanting in the spirit of her profession if she is indifferent to the fact that her mistress has fine hair. Generally it is the thing of which she is most proud. And Arabella held this sentiment in the warmest way. Her scorn of chignons and of frizzing was indescribable. "You should just see my lady's hair when it is down," she would say, almost crying over the fact which she

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could not ignore, that the hair of many other ladies, when it was up, greatly exceeded in appearance and volume the soft locks of Lady Jane. It was while Arabella was employed in this way that her mistress, looking at her in the glass, said suddenly, "If you were going to be married, Arabella, what should you do to prepare for it? I want very much to know."

"My lady!" cried the girl with a violent start. She let the brush fall from her hand with the fright it gave her, and then without any warning she began to cry. "Indeed, indeed, I never could make up my mind to leave your ladyship—not in a hurry like he wants me to—never! never! at least till you were suited," Arabella said.

"Oh!" cried Lady Jane, turning round, "then you really were thinking! I did not know of that, I assure you; I never thought of it. Are you really going to be married, Arabella?"

"It is none of my doing," the girl said; "indeed I told him I couldn't make up my mind to leave: but he says—you know, my lady, men find always a deal to say—"

"Do they?" said Lady Jane with a soft laugh of sympathy. Yes, it was true, they had a deal to say; and then sometimes when they were silent that said still more. She paused upon this recollection with a soft wave of pleasure going over her; and then—perhaps not so anxious to understand Arabella as to follow out her own thoughts—"Tell me," she said, "when you go away from me, Arabella—out of Billings and out of Grosvenor Square—into a little small house, how does it feel to you? Do you dislike it very much? Is it very wretched? I should like to know how you feel about it. One day here in these large rooms—and the next in a tiny little place, without servants, without any conveniences. It is only lately that I have thought about this, but I want to know. Nobody can tell me so well as you."

"Oh, my lady," cried Arabella, "don't you know without telling? Why, it's home! That makes all the difference; though it's a little place, yet it's your own."

Lady Jane's eyes still remained unsatisfied, though she said "To be sure," vaguely. "To be sure," she repeated; "but then here you have everything done for you, and everything is nice. You cannot have the same at home."

"No, my lady; but it's so nice and fresh there; no carpets or things to catch

the dust—except in the parlor, and that is only for Sundays. The floors all so white and fresh; the plates and the dishes shining; the fire so cheerful. I can't deny," said Arabella, her tone of delight sinking to one of candid avowal, "that the parlor is—well, my lady, it is a dreadful little place; and poor mother is so proud of it! it is not so nice as the room the under housemaids have their tea in. I feel just as if I were one of the inferior servants when I sit there. But the kitchen—if your ladyship took a fancy to playing at being poor, like the French queen did, you know, my lady—it would be quite nice enough even for you."

"You should not say 'like the French queen did,' that is bad grammar," said Lady Jane softly. "I sha'n't play at being poor, Arabella, but perhaps some day—All this you have been saying is about your home, but that was not what I asked. If you were going to be married, what would you do? You could not keep any servants; you would have to do all sorts of things yourself. Do you think it will be a dreadful sacrifice to make?"

Arabella gave her lady's hair a few tugs, perhaps unconsciously to hide a little emotion, perhaps with a little gentle indignation at her mistress's humble estimate of her prospects. "It is not so low as you think, my lady," she said. "He is a careful young man that has saved a little, and can give me a nice home and keep me a servant. I'll have no dirty work to do nor need to soil my fingers. He thinks, like your ladyship, that it will be a great sacrifice; but what can a girl have better, mother says, than a good, steady husband and a nice home? and I think so too."

Lady Jane smiled with gentle sympathy. "And so do I, Arabella. Still that is not the question I was asking. It will be a small house, I suppose, and one little maid? And I suppose you will have many things to do, and to live with—" Here she paused, blushing for her own want of perception. "You are accustomed to things very much the same as mine," she continued softly, "and it must be different. How will you put up with it—or shall you not mind? Only a few little rooms, perhaps, to live in."

"Oh, my lady," said Arabella, "a few! We shall have a little parlor, where I can sit in the afternoons. What could any one wish for more? Your ladyship yourself, or even the duchess, though you have all the castle to choose from, you can't sit in more than one room at a time.

And it has often surprised me, my lady, to see how, with all those beautiful drawing-rooms and all their grand furniture, your ladyship and the duchess will prefer quite a little bit of a place to sit in. Look at the morning-room at the castle! and her Grace's boudoir here is quite small in comparison. I can't see that it will make much difference to me."

"That is a very just observation, Arabella," said Lady Jane; "I wonder I never thought of it before. Nobody can sit in more than one room at a time, it is quite true; that is all one really needs. I am very much obliged to you for putting it so clearly."

"Yes, my lady," said Arabella, with a little courtesy of acknowledgment. She was pleased, but not so much surprised as might have been expected. She was fond of her mistress, and had a great reverence for her in her way, but she was aware that in practical matters she herself was far more likely to be right than Lady Jane. And then she proceeded on her own account to give many particulars which were very satisfactory to herself, and inspired her mistress with great interest, but threw no further light upon the point which occupied her mind. She smiled to herself afterwards, with a mixture of sympathy and amusement, to think that Arabella was going to be married *too*. But in the mean time that new light as to the number of rooms which were indispensable, did her a great deal of good, and threw much light upon the chief subject of her thoughts.

Her next inquiries were addressed to a very different kind of counsellor. It was well for Lady Jane that she was not on womanly confidential terms with her sister-in-law, or it would have been very difficult to keep the secret of her love from that acute observer; as it was, the curiosity of Susan was much awakened by some of her questions. She asked her, "What do girls in the other classes do when they are preparing for their marriage?" Lady Jane would not say the lower classes, partly lest she might offend Lady Hungerford, partly because of a delicate sense she had that deficiency of any kind should not be made a mark for those who suffered under it. Lady Jane's politeness was such that among blind people she would have thought it right to assume that blindness was the common rule of life, and to suppress in her talk any invidious distinction of herself as a person who saw.

"What do they do when they are preparing for their marriage? Why, dear,

they generally spend most of their time, and far too much of their thoughts, in buying their wedding clothes."

"That is so in all classes," said Lady Jane; "but still that cannot be everything. Some must be bent upon doing their best in their new life. Those, for instance, who have not much money."

"I am afraid I cannot tell you," said Susan, "for I never was in that predicament. My people, you know, were vulgar, and it was a great rise in the world for me, of course, to marry Hungerford."

"I do not think you have ever thought it that," said Lady Jane.

"Haven't I? I ought to have then. It *was* a great rise; but my people were never poor. A good girl who is going to marry a clerk, or that sort of thing, buys a cookery-book, I believe, and has her husband's slippers warmed for him when he comes home. She finds out all the cheap shops, and puts down her expenses every day in a book. That is all I know."

"I was not thinking of a clerk's wife.

I was thinking rather of a gentleman—in the country, for instance—not great people, but perfectly *nice*, and as—as good as ourselves, you know. If a girl wanted very much to do her duty, I wonder what she would do?"

"It would depend very much upon her husband's requirements, I should say. If he was a foxhunter, she would probably ride a great deal, and find out all about horses and dogs; if he was studious, she would pay a little attention to books. All that wears off after a little time," said Lady Hungerford. "But at the beginning, when a girl is not used to it, and is making experiments, she takes up all her husband's fads, and attempts to humor him. By-and-by, of course, everything finds its level, and she lets him alone and follows her own way."

"You think, then, that it does not make much difference what one does," said Lady Jane.

"What one does! You do not mean yourself, I suppose? Crown princesses are above all that sort of thing; they are too magnificent for human nature's daily food. You will be married by proxy, no doubt, when the time comes, in Westminster Abbey."

"Which means I shall never be married at all," said Lady Jane, with subdued pleasure and a delightful sense of her own superior knowledge. She smiled with such a tender softness that her lively sister-in-law, who, if not formed in a very delicate mould, was yet capable of kind

impulse, and clever enough to understand the superiority of the spotless creature beside her, had a moment of shame and self-reproach.

"If you are not, it will be all the worse for somebody," she said. "When I was married I used to watch Hungerford to find out what he wanted me to do; but I soon tired of that, for he never wanted me to do anything. Most men like you to strike out your own line, and never mind them. That is why I say everything finds its level. The most dreadful thing in the world is a woman who is always studying to do her duty, and watching her husband to anticipate his wishes. They don't like to have their wishes anticipated. They like to state them honestly, and have the satisfaction of getting what they want. They are strange creatures, men. The best thing is to strike out your own line, and never interfere with theirs. It is always most satisfactory in the end."

Lady Jane made no answer to this, except by a little sigh, in which Lady Hungerford, to her great astonishment, noticed an impatient sound. "What is it you want to know?" she said. "Why are you asking me such questions?" But Lady Jane made no reply. She had got a little enlightenment from Arabella, but none from this woman of the world. How to manage her husband was not a question which disturbed her. The clerk's wife studying the cookery-book pleased her more than the lady who first tried to humor her husband's fads, and then struck out her own line. In such a person the sweet and true but not too lively intelligence of Lady Jane had little interest. She dwelt on the other with a tender sympathy. After all, it was not entirely in the light of the husband that she regarded this new life. She wanted to put herself in tone with it, to understand its requirements for herself as well as for him. She retired into her own chamber and thought it out in the quiet which, even in London, is possible in a great house. It would not be possible, perhaps, to have every room cushioned and every noise stopped before it reached her, as here. Lady Jane imagined herself stepping down into a world of noise and bustle, and duties quite unknown to her. It would be her business to bring harmony out of that; not to confront the guillotine, as she once thought, but perhaps to do something even harder, to overcome the petty and small, even the sordid perhaps, and show what her order was capable of, and what a thing it was to be a woman. A

soft enthusiasm filled her for those unknown, humble duties. As for giving up, what was there to give up? Arabella's philosophy gave her a shield against every suggestion of loss. You can't sit in more than one room at a time, if you have a hundred to choose from. To think that a girl like that should find the true solution of the parable without knowing anything about it, which the wisest shook their heads over! Lady Jane, with that enlightenment, did not feel the least fear. Next time she was out without supervision she drove to a bookseller's, and bought all the books she could find upon household economy. "How to Live on Three Hundred a Year," was one of these volumes. With this she did not quite sympathize, feeling it too fine and elaborate. Her instinct told her that domestic economy, to be beautiful, must be more spontaneous and not so labored, and that some things were tawdry, and some sordid, in the arrangements laid down. She thought over the problems in these books with great conscientiousness. She thought a French cook would be much the best to start with, for they were so economical. She thought plate would be the cheapest thing to use, since it never breaks. But with a few mistakes of this kind, which were inevitable, and which experience would set right in three months, Lady Jane made herself out a beautiful programme for her behavior as a poor man's wife. It gave her a sense of elation to feel that at the least she could do something, and qualify herself for fulfilling a heroic destiny. She was quite unconscious of either downfall or humiliation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ART OF STRATEGY.

BUT the duchess's thoughts were of a more serious kind, and it was she who through all had the most difficult part to play.

Perhaps five or six years before, when Lady Jane was in the first bloom of womanhood, her mother would have thought but little of Reginald Winton as a husband for her child. She would have preferred, need it be said, another set of strawberry leaves; or even an earl with a good estate would have seemed to her a more suitable match. But as the years went on, and it became apparent to her that what with Lady Jane's own visionary stateliness, and the known folly of her father, it was quite possible that there might be no match for her daughter at all,

her ideas were sensibly modified. It did not seem to her at all desirable that Lady Jane should remain Lady Jane forever. The duchess had experienced no absolute blessedness in life. Her husband had given her infinite trouble, her son had by no means realized her ideal, and her daughter had gone beyond it, and sometimes vexed her as much by very excellence as Hungerford did by his commonplace nature. But still she thought it better to be thwarted and disappointed at the head of a family, than to sicken of solitude and pine out of it. She thought the same for her daughter; though indeed Lady Jane's character would have lent itself much better to the maiden state than that of her more practical and active-minded mother. She had, too, a still more stringent reason, not of an abstract character at all. She knew that some time or other a crash must come. The duke had never denied himself in his life, and he was not likely, of his own free will, to begin now. But as everything has to be paid for sooner or later, one way or another, she knew very well the time was coming when their fictitious fortunes would collapse, and it would be known to all the world that their income was not enough to support them, and that they were burdened with debts which they could not pay. And indeed it often seemed to her that she would be glad when the crash came — except for Jane. Notwithstanding her desire that it should come and be done with, she was ready to fight with all her strength to keep it off till Jane should be out of its reach. And Winton, she felt, had stepped in in the very nick of time. She was under no delusion such as filled the mind of her daughter about Winton's poverty. She knew exactly what his standing was, and that though he was not a brilliant match, he was good enough for any girl, however exalted, who had no fortune to speak of, of her own. He was more satisfactory in appearance, and manners, and character, than three-fourths of the eligible men in England, and in fact he was himself eminently eligible, a man whom no parent (in full possession of his senses) could possibly despise. The duke was not in full possession of his senses on this point, but his wife could not see the justice of allowing her daughter's future to be spoiled by this partial insanity on the part of her husband. It is a fine thing for a wife to obey her husband, but the duchess was perhaps a little impatient of the yoke. She had never gone against him,

save for his good. She had submitted sorrowfully to the consequences of his follies when she found herself powerless to restrain them. But she said to herself almost sternly that she would not allow Jane to be ruined. Let him say what he would, this excellent husband, this good, nice, well-off man should not be repulsed. If she could persuade the duke to hear reason, so much the better; but if not — But she did not like domestic dissension and a breach of the decorum of life more than another, and the thought that she might be compelled to place herself in active opposition to her husband distressed her beyond measure.

The duchess laid her plans with great and anxious care. She invited Winton to the few stately gatherings which were still to be held in Grosvenor Square, and she threw him in the duke's way, prompting him beforehand with subjects such as would please that arbiter of fate. It was no small trial of endurance for both Winton and Lady Jane, but the success of the attempt so far seemed great. The duke noticed the genial commoner who was so ready to interest himself in his Grace's favorite subjects. He even asked, "Who is this Mr. Winton?" with an interest which made the duchess's heart beat. She gave a sketch of her *protégé* off-hand, laying great stress upon the antiquity of his lineage. "Ah, oh," the duke said indifferently. He was not impressed, nor did it make any difference to him that this gentleman, whose family had been settled for so many hundred years in their manor, had recently had a great accession of wealth. He asked no further questions about him, and yawned when the duchess said that she had thought of inviting him to form one of the usual autumn party at Billings. "Oh, no, I have no objections," his Grace said; "there must always, I suppose, be a few nobodies to fill up the corners." This, after his transitory show of interest, was like a cold douche to the duchess. But she did not allow herself to be dismayed. She managed, as a great lady can always manage, to get Winton a great number of invitations to her own magnificent circle, and threw him perpetually in her husband's way. Some of her friends and contemporaries more than suspected the duchess's game. But she kept a brave and cheerful front to them all, and never allowed herself to be found out; and not only had she to contrive all this, and baffle all beholders, but she had likewise a struggle to maintain even with the man

whose cause she was upholding. He wanted, forsooth, to make quicker progress. He wanted to see more of his betrothed. He wanted to have it announced to all the world. He was more impracticable, more unreasonable than ever man was, although she was wearing herself out in efforts to help him. Lady Jane did not say a word, but she looked at her mother's proceedings with a gentle surprise and high, silent wonder, keeping herself aloof from all the plottings, avoiding the subject altogether. It was all done for Jane, but Jane disapproved, and blamed her mother in her heart. This was the unkindest cut of all. Notwithstanding, the duchess held by her point; there was no other way to do it. When she gave Winton her invitation to Billings, he received it in the most uncomfortable way. He colored high; he rose up and paced about the room. "If I am to come as an impostor I would rather not come at all," he said; "if I may come as Jane's affianced —"

"How can that be, Mr. Winton, unless her father gives his consent?"

To this Winton made no reply, except a peevish, "I cannot go on false pretences any more."

"You have met the duke six times, without rushing at him with a request for his daughter! Is that what you call false pretences? Jacob served for Rachael seven years."

"Ah! and so would I; but he had it out with her father first. He did not hang about and profess to be there only for Laban's agreeable conversation; that makes all the difference."

"I think he could have stood that; he had a robust conscience," said the duchess, with a smile. And then she added, "I am trying to do what I can for you. If you will not agree I cannot help it."

"I suppose I must agree. There does not seem anything else for me to do," he said; which was the most ungracious reply she ever had to that invitation, which was rarely extended to any one of so little importance. At Billings, Lady Germaine's principle of asking people who would amuse her was never resorted to. The people who were asked were very noble and splendid people, but they were not amusing, as a rule. It was such a compliment to Winton as the uninitiated could not understand. But there were, of course, a great many people who knew better than the duchess herself did the intention with which this invitation was given. Lady Hungerford, for instance,

sitting quietly with her husband after dinner, having heard of it that morning, suddenly astonished him by bursting out into a great fit of laughter. As nothing had been said to account for this, and Lord Hungerford's company of itself was not calculated to produce hilarity, he was much surprised, and at once requested to know what she was laughing about.

"Oh, it is nothing," she said. "Your mother is asking young Winton, the man, you know, who has that pretty house in Kensington, to go to Billings, for the shooting."

"Is that so very funny?" said Lord Hungerford.

"Don't you see, you thick-head," said his wife, who was not, perhaps, so exquisite in her language as became her present rank, "she has taken it into her head that he will do for Jane, and she thinks by taking him down to Billings that she will get your father to consent?"

"For Jane!" said Hungerford in dismay.

"That is your mother's little plan. But what amuses me is to see that she thinks she will get your father to consent."

But it did not appear that Hungerford found the same amusement in the thought. He was slow of intelligence, and took some time to master it. "For Jane!" he said at least half-a-dozen times over during the course of the evening, and when he next met his mother he proceeded at once to investigate the matter.

"What is this I hear about Regy Winton?" he said. "Susan tells me you are thinking of him for Jane."

"Susan is so well informed —" said the duchess, with a little redness of indignation. "But I think you know Jane well enough to be aware that thinking of any one for her would not do much good."

"That is what I thought," Hungerford said, falling readily into the snare. "But it wouldn't be at all a bad thing," he added, "if it could be brought about. He has plenty of money, and nothing against him; and Jane isn't quite so young as she was, don't you know?"

This was true enough; but that such a question should be discussed between her son and his wife made the duchess's blood boil. "I am not so clever as Susan and you, Hungerford," she said, with fine satire. "You will manage your daughter's marriage, I don't doubt, a thousand times better than I shall ever manage mine."

"What has that to do with it?" Hun-

gerford said, surprised, for he was not quick in his intellects. But he added, as he went away, "I should think Regy Winton would be a very good man for Jane."

The duchess was very angry, and declined altogether to take her son into her confidence. But yet she was sustained in her mind by this volunteered opinion, and went on with more boldness. They were all very glad to get out of London, as soon as the duke thought it right to withdraw that support which he felt himself bound to give to the empire and the constitution by going to town every year. His countenance expanded as they left that limited world in which a duke is almost as a common man, and has to submit to see a simple commoner considered much more important than himself. He preferred the country, if for nothing else, on that score. There was space to move about in, and the whole district bowed down before him. He smoothed out even during the journey, though it was by railway, which is a levelling and impertinent way of travelling. The duke's carriage had large labels of "engaged" plastered upon it. But still such a thing had been as that a lawless traveller, a being without veneration or feeling, had seized upon the door-handle and attempted to make an entrance. Nevertheless, even with these drawbacks, the duke already began to show the genial influence of going out of town. And to think that the wife of his bosom should have taken advantage of this in the disingenuous way she did! It was not absolutely on the journey, but on that first evening at home, when the noble pair took, as had been their habit since before any one could remember, a little stroll together after dinner in the cool of the evening under the ancestral shades; and just when his Grace had looked round him with a sigh of satisfaction, and announced that woods were better than bricks and mortar, which was a remark he made habitually in about the same spot, on about the same day of every year.

"That is very true," the duchess said (as she always said on similar occasions), "and there are no trees like our own trees. I hope her native air," added the crafty woman, "will do something for Jane."

"For Jane! Is there anything the matter with Jane?" said her august papa.

"I felt sure you must have observed it; you are always so keen-sighted where

Jane is concerned. I have thought she looked pale; and she has a little air of—what shall I call it—preoccupation."

"I do not see," said the duke, half indignantly, "what she can have to be preoccupied about."

"She has always been so tenderly cared for, that is true. But we must remember that she is no longer a girl, and there are thoughts which come into one's mind which it is difficult to avoid."

"What thoughts? A young lady in Jane's position need have no thoughts that can give her any trouble. I hope that even in these revolutionary times, when everything is going to pieces, the house of Billings is still sufficiently secure for that."

"Yes, yes; there is no doubt on that question. Jane has no doubt," the duchess said, correcting herself. "But there are problems, you know, which occupy the mind. It is a revolutionary age, as you say, and even young women are not exempt. Besides, if you will let me say so, by the time a girl has come to be five-and-twenty, she often begins to feel, you know, that to be only her father's daughter is not quite enough for her—that she wants some sort of standing of her own."

"Do you mean to tell me that such thoughts as these have ever entered the mind of Jane?" said the duke severely. "My love, I put great faith in you in matters quite within your sphere. But Jane, my daughter!"

"I hope you will allow that she is my daughter as well," the duchess said, with the half laugh, half rage, natural to a woman long accustomed to deal with an impracticable man. She was obliged to laugh at his serious contempt of her, lest she should do worse.

The duke waved his hand. "Yes, yes," he said, in the tone of a man yielding to an unreasonable child. "To be sure, in a way, we do not dispute that. But I am certain," he added, "that you know better than to resist the claims of race. Jane is not so much your daughter, or even mine, as she is the daughter of the race of Altamonts; and in that capacity you may allow, my love, great as are your claims to respect as her mother, that I may be supposed to understand her best."

The exasperation with which the duchess listened to this speech may be understood; but it was not the first by a great many, and she made no revelation of her feelings. On the contrary, she made use

of his solemn vanity with a craft which the exigencies of her position had developed in her.

"You must give me the benefit of your superior insight," she said quite calmly, without any indication of satire in her tone. "Now that you have leisure to give your consideration to family matters, as you could not be expected to do in town, tell me what you think. My impression is that she has begun to think of the future. I was her mother when I was her age. She has been very much admired and sought after."

"Naturally," the duke said, with a wave of his hand.

"And I have a feeling that there is a preference, if I may call it so—an inclination, perhaps—dawning in her mind. To lose her would be a terrible deprivation: still," the duchess said, "I do not suppose it is in your mind to prevent her from marrying."

"To prevent her from — You surely have the most curious way of putting things. There is nothing I desire more truly — when a suitable match can be found."

"But don't you think," cried the duchess, "that we are, perhaps, letting the time slip a little? Of course, I would naturally keep my child by me as long as possible, but in her own interests — Women on the whole are happier to marry, I think," she said doubtfully.

"Marry! of course they are happier to marry. Can there be any doubt upon that subject? A woman unmarried cannot be said to have any life at all!"

"Yes, I should say there was a doubt," said his wife, with again that half-laugh; "and as I am one of them I may be allowed an opinion on the subject. But still, in respect to Jane, I could wish my daughter to marry. In her position, to remain unmarried would really be to remain apart from life."

"It is not to be thought of for a moment; an old maid!" the duke said, with a quaver of pain in his voice; and he thought of that slight indentation — not a hollow, scarcely more than a dimple, which, however, was not a dimple, on Jane's cheek. "The truth is," he said, "that in respect to one's children one deceives one's self. I have no feeling that I am myself any older than I was twenty years ago, and therefore I do not notice the difference in her."

"Hungerford is very old," said the duchess. "He is older in many things than either you or I."

"Ah, Hungerford; what can you expect with that wife?" the duke said with a little shudder; and then he added, with inward alarm but outward jauntiness (so far as dukes can be jaunty), as if her opinion was an excellent joke, "By the way, I suppose that she will have something to say on the subject. She generally has something to say."

"Susan does not conceal her opinion that Jane's chances are all over," said the duchess. "She thinks her *passée*. She believes, I understand, that a clergyman — to whom we could give the living of Billings — would be the likely thing for Jane now."

"A clergyman!" said the duke with rage and horror. His wife laughed a little, but there was anger below her laugh. How it was that Susan's impertinent speeches always came to the ears of her parents-in-law it was difficult to know, but they did so, and they generally had the effect of warming most wholesomely the duke's too noble blood.

"It is very well known how difficult you are," said the duchess. "I don't think myself that the clergyman is likely to present himself; but if Jane had a preference, as I suppose, I should, for my part, be very unwilling to thwart her."

"Jane will have no preference that is not justified by the merit of the object," cried Jane's father. "She is too much my child for that. She will never permit her mind to stray out of her own rank. Indeed, it is with difficulty I realize," he added with dignity, "the possibility that she can have conceived what you call a preference at all. To me she has always been so completely superior, so serene, so —"

"But not cold," the duchess said.

"I don't know what you mean by cold; yes, cold, certainly, in my sense of the word, as every woman ought to be. I believe that unless I put it before her — or you as my representative — she is far too pure-minded and elevated ever to think of marriage at all."

"If she were shut up in a tower," said the duchess; "but unfortunately there are so many things in this world to force the idea upon her, and if you really wish her to marry —"

"Of course I wish her to marry," said the duke almost angrily; and then he added, "in her own rank in life."

The duchess asked herself afterwards whether this had been a wise way of directing her husband's attention to the subject. She had meant it to be very

wise, but conversation is one of those strange things that will manage itself. However closely we may have laid down the lines of what we shall say, it is pretty certain to balk us and direct us in other ways. This had been the case on the present occasion. Instead of directing the duke's mind to the possibility of receiving a suitor who should be indispensable to Jane's happiness, though not of her rank, she had only elicited from him a repetition of his determination that nobody out of her own rank should marry Lady Jane. She thought with a shiver of Winton coming down full of hope with the intention of unfolding his rent-roll, and his statement of the settlements he was able to make, for the duke's satisfaction. The duke was one of the few men remaining in the nineteenth century who are invulnerable to money. Susan Hungerford was enough to give any one a disgust at that manner of filling the household coffers. Perhaps it would have been better to say nothing, to let Winton work upon the duke by that respectful admiration for his opinions which he had already shown. She walked back to the castle with a sense of failure in her mind. For her part, she would not have been at all disinclined towards a clergyman (had he been *nice*) who would have established her child in the beautiful rectory not a quarter of a mile from the lodge gates, and kept her constantly, as it were, at home. But there was no clergyman available, and no question of that. Lady Jane gave her a half-timid glance when she went into the drawing-room with the fresh air of the evening about her. She would not inquire whether there had been any talk of herself between her parents; but she could not keep that question out of her eyes. All the duchess's reply was to give her a kiss, and ask whether she had not been out this delicious evening. "This is better than town," her Grace said. Was it better than town? For the first time with a soft sigh Lady Jane remained silent, and did not echo the sentiment. The country is sweet, and the woods, and fields, and one's native air, and the silence of nature—but there are other things which perhaps even in smoky London, among the bricks and mortar which his Grace made so little of, were still more sweet. Of all people in the world, Lady Jane was the last to prefer a ball-room, or the jaded and heated crowds at the end of the season. But for the first time in her life she thought of these assemblies with a sigh.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
JULIET.

BY HELENA FAUCIT MARTIN.

31 ONSLow SQUARE, 1881.

"Trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange."

LET me now try, my dear friend, to speak to you of the real Juliet as she filled my imagination when the time came for me to venture on impersonating her in London. In my first trials at Richmond I had ardor and self-forgetfulness enough; but I was too young, too close upon the age of Shakespeare's Juliet, considering the tardier development of an English girl, to understand so strong and deep a nature; neither had my imagination the power to grasp the whole scope and purpose of the play; and without this power no one can ever be qualified to embody one of Shakespeare's heroines. Hitherto I had only known the outward form of the poet's exquisite creation, and could not reach the deeper meaning that lies beneath it; indeed I never should have reached it, had I not subsequently been allowed to see a real Shakespeare instead of the mutilated copy, adapted for the stage, in which I originally knew the play. Now a new light broke in upon me. It was no longer only a love-story, the most beautiful of all I had ever read, but a tale in which, as in the Greek dramas of which I had seen some glimpses, the young and innocent were doomed to punishment in retribution for the guilt of kindred whose "bloody feuds" were to be expiated and ended by the death of their posterity.

But even then how little could I know! Although the torch had been put into my hand, I could only see what my small experience showed me. The wonderful proportion, the harmony, the loveliness and pathos, grew upon me only with my mental growth, and could not be grasped in unripe years. Besides, I needed above all things the practice in my art, which to the artist is the greatest help towards developing the poet's meaning, and throws lights upon it which no study, however close, can give. In certain moods of mind the poet's intention may be read by you as plainly as in an open book. The inspiration of the scene makes clear what before had not been even dreamed of, but which, once shown, is never to be forgotten or neglected. I always tried to keep my mind open to such revealings,—tried not to repeat mechanically any part of a character, but always to go to it as though

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I had never acted it before. This was easy enough in Shakespeare's plays, but very difficult in those of some other dramatists.

With the complete play in my hands, I could not fail to see that the key-note was struck in the prologue, where the whole purpose of the poet is told within the compass of a sonnet. It speaks of the bitter feuds of "two households" for whose rivalry lives were being sacrificed, and for whose "ancient grudge" the followers of both were continually breaking into "new mutiny." To teach a lesson to the reckless leaders of those brawls, "bred of an airy word," it was necessary that each should suffer in his tenderest point, each losing his dearest hope, his only child—

Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Do, with their death, bury their parents' strife.

Nor was the lesson to be read to them alone, but to those "rebellious subjects" also, those "enemies of peace" who helped by their advocacy of one side or the other to disturb the quiet and security of Verona's streets.*

As if to emphasize the purpose shown in the prologue, almost the last words in the play are those spoken by the prince of Verona, whose kinsmen Mercutio and Paris had both fallen victims to a purely hereditary animosity:—

Capulet! Montague!

See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!

And I for winking at your discords too,
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punished.

With these passages before me, I started on my study of the play from a fresh point. Romeo and Juliet were no common lovers. In their persons they must be pure, beautiful, generous, devoted, and in every way meet like the spotless Iphigenia, to be offered up a worthy sacrifice to the gods as an expiation for the past, a healing and propitiation for the future; and in such wise that the remembrance of their death should make impossible any after enmity—each party alike sharing in the woful penalty.

Capulet. O, brother Montague, give me thy hand:

This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
Can I demand.

* I considered this prologue of so much importance for the audience, that when I last played Juliet at Drury Lane Theatre, I spoke it with a domino thrown over my dress, and in front of a fine scene—painted many years before by Mr. David Roberts—representing the tomb of the Scaligers in Verona.

Montague. But I can give thee more:
For I will raise her statue in pure gold;
That, while Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set,
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie;
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

Very terrible has been the awakening of these two passionate old men to the miserable folly of their feud! At our first sight of them, they rush angrily into the *mêlée* of their retainers which opens the play,—no reason asked how it has arisen,—Capulet shouting, "Give me my long sword, ho!" and Montague, held back by his wife, hurling defiance in the words, "Thou villain, Capulet!" At our last sight of them, we leave them standing remorsefully hand in hand by the dead bodies of their only children, each reading in the other's face the rueful lineaments of his own cureless grief.

It is only when the din of the street brawl has died down under the stern rebuke and threats of the prince of Verona that we hear of Romeo. "Right glad am I," says Lady Montague, "he was not at this fray;" and then, in answer to her inquiry as to where he is, she is told by his friend and cousin, Benvolio, that he was seen an hour before dawn walking in one of his favorite haunts "underneath the grove of sycamore,"—which draws from his father the remark, that

Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew.

Shakespeare, we see, has taken the greatest pains to show the kind of love-sickness into which Romeo has been thrown by the charms of the fair but icy Rosaline, who chose to be "forsworn to love"—that vague yearning of the fancy, that idle listlessness which finds vent in "sighing like furnace," and writing sonnets to his "mistress' eyebrow," and which is as unlike the love that is soon to absorb his whole soul "as moonlight is to sunlight, or as water is to wine." Much of it is but "according to the fashion of the time." Not only Romeo's habits, his very language undergoes a change from the moment he sees Juliet. It is no longer the fancy only that speaks, but the heart.

Shakespeare prepares us early for the coming tragedy in the foreboding reluctance with which Romeo allows himself to be persuaded by his friends to go to the "old accustomed feast" that night at Capulet's house. Destiny has begun

her work. Some power constrains him against his will. He has no thought of enjoyment before him, for he says, —

Give me a torch : I am not for this ambling ;
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mercutio. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Romeo. Not I, believe me : you have dancing shoes

With nimble soles ; I have a soul of lead,
So stakes me to the ground, I cannot move.

I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.

Even although he has heard that the fair Rosaline is to be among the guests, he is unable to throw off a heavy misgiving of calamity "hanging in the stars," which is to date from "this night's revels," and to close in "some vile forfeit of untimely death." "But," he adds,

He that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail !

words which always remind me of those to the same effect spoken by the lady in "Comus," when forebodings and anxieties perplex her, —

Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength !

In every way happier than Juliet, Romeo is fortunate in both his parents. They are from the first loving, considerate, and sympathetic ; and, had they known his wishes, they would have spared no pains to gratify them. Not so with Juliet. Although an only child, there has been obviously not much tenderness lavished on her. "Earth," says Lord Capulet,

Hath swallowed all my hopes but she ;
She is the hopeful lady of my earth.

This would lead one to believe that she was the cherished joy of his life. And when Paris presses his suit, he says, —

Get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part.

Yet this profession does not stand the proof ; for when, later, his child entreats with all the earnestness of despair but to be heard, he is deaf as an adder to her appeal, his own will admitting of no question. Apart from this unreasonable despotism in his family, old Capulet is in every sense a gentleman. Observe, for instance, the manner in which he reprimands Tybalt when he would insult Romeo at the ball : —

Young Romeo is't ? Verona brags of him,
To be a virtuous and well-governed youth ;
I would not for the wealth of all this town,

Here in my house, do him disparagement :
Therefore be patient, take no note of him,
It is my will.

Tybalt. I'll not endure him.

Cap. He shall be endured.

What, Goodman boy ! — I say, he shall ; go to ;

You'll not endure him ?

You'll make a mutiny among my guests !

Choleric and unreasonable as he is, yet I like him much better than his wife, who appears to me to be merely a piece of cold, formal propriety ; of the type that would "with a hoard of shallow maxims preach down a daughter's heart." One can see that there is no sympathy between Lady Capulet and her daughter, although Juliet, her "loving child," as she calls her when she has lost her, would not question that she owed her mother all obedience, and would, when she first comes before us, never hesitate in showing it. With what bluntness this hard mother brings the sacred subject of marriage before the mind of her undeveloped, yet, as she ought to know, imaginative daughter ! —

Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married ?

Juliet's simple faltering reply should teach her how far from her thoughts was such a subject — "It is an honor that I dream not of."

She stands bewildered, and a silent listener to all her mother has to say concerning the virtues, and beauties, and accomplishments of Paris, her panegyric echoed in the garrulous piling up of admiring epithets by the nurse, —

Why, he's a man of wax.
Nay, he's a flower ; in faith a very flower.

Impatient at getting no word from Juliet after all this, Lady Capulet says, —

Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love ?

Juliet, still startled and unprepared, takes up the word given to her, and says, —

I'll look to like, if looking liking move ;
but adds in all ignorant obedience, —

But no more deep will I endart mine eye,
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

Poor Juliet ! With a father who loves her in a wilful, passionate way, and always with the understanding that when he has set his mind upon a thing her will shall bend to his ; with a mother who, if she loves her, entirely fails to understand her nature, or to feel for her in a matter where even hard mothers are tender ; and her

only other friend, her foster-mother, — a coarse-minded, weakly, indulgent, silly woman, — over whom, since her infancy, she has ruled supreme, coaxing and tyrannizing by turns, — not one of them having an idea of marriage beyond the good worldly match thought necessary for the rich heiress of the Capulets! Amid such surroundings has bloomed into early girlhood this creature, with a rich imagination full of romance, and with a boundless capacity for self-devotion; her dreams all of a future, with a love in store for her responsive to her own capacity of loving, inspired by an ideal hero possessing the best attributes of manhood, — a love in which her whole being should be merged, and by which her every faculty and feeling should be quickened into noblest life.

These dreams were even now to be realized in the person of him who was unwillingly making his slow way among the maskers to her father's festival, carrying his "heavy burden" of love along with him. He has not found it the "tender thing" which Mercutio calls it. No,

It is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous; and it pricks like
thorn.

Following his friends into the ball-room he looks carelessly around, and lo! what do his eyes light upon? A vision of a beauty unguessed before!

No haughty coldness here, no measured, stately movement. He watches entranced this lovely vision swaying to the rhythmic movement of the music, with unstudied grace, so noble, yet so child-like; looking for nothing, unconscious of admiring eyes, delighting in the simple enjoyment of the dance, with a bright and happy smile of amused delight at the novelty of the scene beaming in the lovely and innocent face.

What is this creature, this "snowy dove trooping with crows"?

What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight?

he asks some strange servant; who replies, —

I know not, sir.
Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn
bright!
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!

Did my heart live till now? forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

All the wonder of this gracious creature's charm flashes swift as lightning upon him, and reveals to his awakened senses a something before which all former dreams and yearnings vanish and become as though they had never been. He feels instinctively that there is within this peerless form a soul as peerless, towards which his own rushes as towards its other self. The languid, fantastic youth of dreams and whims becomes at once the man of purpose. He puts on his armor and begins the battle of life. No hesitation now, such as we have seen in him before, — no more, "My mind misgives me!"

Meanwhile, we may be sure that "yonder knight," who is no other than the county Paris, has been doing his best during the dance to excite Juliet's admiration. She has come straight from the recapitulation of his perfections, and knows well from her mother's words that, "like" him or not, this comely gentleman, "the valiant Paris," is destined by her parents to be her husband. She has therefore "looked to like," as she was told to do, but evidently to no effect on her part, whatever increase of ardor the meeting may have brought to Paris. Her heart and fancy are alike untouched, when, at the close of the dance, a stranger, in the dress of a pilgrim, "with his cockle, hat, and staff," approaches to watch, as he says,

her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make happy my rude hand.

During the dispute between Capulet and Tybalt, Romeo has made his way to Juliet. It is only the close of their conversation that we hear, when he asks, as the pilgrim, that his "unworthy hand" may be permitted to touch "this holy shrine," earnestly pleading that he may be allowed to atone for the roughness of his touch by the softer pressure of his lips upon her flower-soft hand. The touch is gentle, the words are few; but that touch of "palm to palm," those few words, have an eloquence more persuasive than volumes of passionate phrases. The tender, beseeching eyes, the tremulous voice full of adoration and humility — have these not spoken? The heart's deepest meanings rarely find utterance in words.

The "dear saint" replies to the holy pilgrim's devotion in a playful manner, telling him that his lips, as a pilgrim, he "must use in prayer." Far too soon breaks in the nurse, who no doubt likes

not this talk with a stranger, and tells Juliet that her mother craves a word with her. Romeo takes this opportunity to ask, "What is her mother?" Upon which the nurse replies that she is the "lady of the house, and a good lady," and that she herself had nursed her daughter, whom he had "talk'd withal," adding, in the true gossiping manner of her class:

I tell you, — he, that can lay hold of her,
Shall have the chinks.

Rom. Is she a Capulet?
O dear ancestor! my life is my foe's debt.

Benvolio hurries his friend away before, as he thinks, the fact of their presence has been discovered — and also wisely, while yet "the sport is at the best." Lord Capulet most courteously urges them to remain to supper, although he knows who they are; and finding they decline, he bids them good-night, thanking them graciously for their company: —

Why, then I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; good-night.

Juliet naturally wishes to know Romeo's name, as he had wished to know hers. As the Montagues leave the room, each by turns saluting her, she asks and learns from the nurse the names of Romeo's friends. He lingers last; and to her eager, "What's he, that follows there," she adds, to recall him more particularly to the nurse's attention, what must have appeared very singular to herself, he "that would not dance?" But the nurse has to inquire, and finds —

His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.

Juliet. My only love sprung from my only
hate!

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

The tragic note is struck. There is no questioning of her feeling — no doubt, no hesitation. Like lightning love has shot into her heart and left its barb, — whether for joy or woe, time alone will show. This is, possibly, their last as well as first meeting. Such is Juliet's thought as the act closes. For what ensues Shakespeare prepares the audience in the words of the prologue to the second act.

Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;

But passion lends them power, time means to
meet,

Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet.

Romeo, taken reluctantly from the feast by his friends, who will not sup with their enemy, steals away from them immediately. Although the "snowy dove" is his fair enemy, his "unrest" causes him to hover near the place where he has found his true life. The foreboding of trouble may hang over him, but this is forgotten in the presence of Juliet. The whole man is changed. "With love's light wings" he overleaps the wall of Capulet's garden. No talk now of "sinking under Love's heavy burden." Indeed, no talk at all. No more confidences to his friends. This real passion makes him dumbly happy — is too sacred to be named and talked over.

Neither of the lovers can have any insight into the feeling of the other, when the same impulse, or destiny, which leads Romeo to find his way beneath his lady's chamber window, despite all obstruction — "the orchard walls are high, and hard to climb" — urges Juliet to seek the freshness of the night air in the balcony or *loggia* leading from her room, to think over and indulge these new sensations of mingled happiness and pain, which had so wildly and entirely taken possession of her. The tumult of her feelings must find vent. What a new life has opened to her! The past seems swept away; her spirit has risen at a bound at some undreamt-of call. It has not been left to her will to determine how "deep she will endart her eye." The invincible and unknown *Erös* has come upon her unlooked for, unannounced, in all his terror and in all his beauty. But he to whom she is prepared to "give up all herself" is separated from her by a bitter and impassable family feud of which she has been hearing all her life. Her throbbing pulses, the flush of the heated ball-room, make the cool moonlight air most welcome. She could not breathe within. Here she is alone, safe even from the silly prattle of the nurse, whom she has left dozing in her chair. She will tell her secret to the soft night breeze, — whisper to it over and over the name which is so dear and yet so fatal, — adjure young Montague in fancy to renounce it,

And for that name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.

Oh, how sweeter far than sweetest note of any nightingale's must have been that soft, tremulous, half-inarticulate voice as it floated in the still air towards Romeo's ear! What ecstasy to learn, and *thus* to learn, that she, who "has wounded him so deeply, is by him wounded"! At first

too amazed, too doubtful of his joy, he is fearful to interrupt her spoken reverie, but upon the offer of herself his restraint can hold out no longer, and he breaks in vehemently with —

I take thee at thy word :
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptised ;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Too terrified at first at finding she has had a listener, Juliet recognizes neither voice nor words, and exclaims angrily : —

What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in night,
So stumblest on my counsel ?

In his reply he shrinks from repeating the name which is hateful to himself, "because it is an enemy to thee." With a thrill of rapture Juliet whispers to herself : —

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound.

Yet she must be assured from his own lips how he came hither and wherefore. Thus, when she tells him of the peril of the place, — no less than death, "if any of my kinsmen find thee here," — he answers : —

Alack ! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords ; look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

Delicious to her heart as this rejoinder is, it cannot still her anxiety for his safety.

I would not for the world they saw thee here.
Rom. And but thou love me, let them find me here :

My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of my love.

Then she is full of amazement as to how he came there. Who could have guided him ?

By whose direction found'st thou out this place ?

Rom. By love.

All love. Love is on his lips as in his heart.

I am no pilot ; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washed with the furthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Juliet, when partly pacified as to his safety — "I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight" — has time to think of how she has committed herself, in how unmaidenly a guise she must appear before him.

Women are deeply in debt to Shakespeare for all the lovely, noble things he has put into his women's hearts and mouths, but surely for nothing more than for the words in which Juliet's reply is couched. Only one who knew of what a true woman is capable, in frankness, in courage, and self-surrender when her heart is possessed by a noble love, could have touched with such delicacy, such infinite charm of mingled reserve and artless frankness, the avowal of so fervent yet so modest a love, the secret of which had been so strangely stolen from her. As the whole scene is the noblest paean to love ever written, so is what Juliet now says supreme in subtlety of feeling and expression, where all is beautiful. Watch all the fluctuations of emotion which pervade it, and you will understand what a task is laid upon the actress to interpret them, not in voice and tone only, important as these are, but also in manner and in action. The generous frankness of the giving, the timid drawing back, fearful of having given too much unsought ; the perplexity of the whole, all summed up in that sweet entreaty for pardon with which it closes. But I must quote the whole passage : —

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face ;
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.

Fain would I dwell on form ; fain, fain deny
What I have spoke ; but farewell compliment !
Dost thou love me ? I know thou wilt say —

Ay,

And I will take thy word : yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou may'st prove false ; at lovers' perjuries,
They say Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully ;
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo ; but, else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond ;
And therefore thou may'st think my 'haviour light :

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My true love's passion : therefore, pardon me ;
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

I considered this speech as one of the most difficult in the play, and loved it and dreaded it alike, always fearing to do too much or too little in it. But, indeed, the whole scene is a very fatiguing and anxious one.

How much must Romeo have felt the contrast between the gentle, ardent, yet deprecating tones he listens to so rapturously, and the unsympathetic voice in which the haughty Rosaline had told him she thought it virtue to give nought in return for love! What was her cold beauty to that which he was now watching in the waning moonlight? And here, too, there was so much besides the beautiful outside. All the frank innocence, the boundless generosity which told of the noble sweetness of the inner nature! He is spell-bound into silence, and cannot break the music of those words that flood his heart with happiness, until Juliet, by asking him not to think lightly of her love so frankly expressed, binds him to her by a tie never to be sundered. That passionate, childlike loving queens her in his sight, and makes him her slave forever. To his eyes, "being o'er his head," she appears as "a winged messenger of heaven." He would make the pure, chaste moon, as being most like to her, the goddess to bear witness to his vows — "Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear." But Juliet interrupts, and will not let him swear by

the inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

He asks, "What shall I swear by?"
She answers: —

Do not swear at all;
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Oh, the rich resonance of those words! What scope they give the actress, by her delivery of them, to mark the enthusiasm and the devotion of Juliet's nature, which is so soon to develop into the heroic constancy that carries her, alone and unsupported, through a trial more fearful than death itself!

Suddenly she thinks that such joy as this cannot be lasting, — that this contract between them is

too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say — It lightens.

But such a reflection is only momentary, for she directly adds: —

Sweet, good-night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet;

and to prove that no disturbing thoughts

have real place within her, says, as she turns to leave him: —

As sweet repose and rest,
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Naturally anxious to delay the parting, Romeo detains Juliet by the entreaty: —

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

How lovely is what follows! —

I gave thee mine before thou did'st request it;
And yet I would it were to give again.

Romeo tremblingly asks: —

Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

At this moment the nurse, awakening, misses Juliet and calls to her; on which, fearing the house may be disturbed and her love in danger, she bids Romeo a hasty adieu, with an eager admonition to "be true." Then, as it may be only the nurse that has awoken, she adds, "Stay but a little, I will come again." When left alone, Romeo cannot believe his happiness: —

I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

So marked a change takes place in Juliet's manner and words on her return, that we are led to suppose the nurse has questioned her on what she thought of Paris and of her approaching marriage with him. From such talk she breaks hastily away, and knowing how little likelihood there was of another meeting with her lover without peril to his life, dreading also that her parents may force her into a marriage with Paris, and having now no time to explain anything, she is obliged to say to Romeo abruptly, in "three words": —

If that thy bent of love be honorable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,

By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
When and what time, thou wilt perform the rite;

And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee, my lord, throughout the world.

Here the nurse again calls: —

Madam.

Jul. I come anon:—But if thou mean'st
not well,
I do beseech thee,—

Another interruption comes from the nurse, to which Juliet, almost past patience, cries:—

By and by, I come:—
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief.

Romeo has only time to say, "So thrive my soul," when Juliet leaves him with, "A thousand times good-night!" The nurse must have been quieted by what Juliet has imparted to her; for when, after Romeo's reluctant steps have taken him to some little distance, Juliet comes back once again to the balcony, there is no further interruption from her. Thinking Romeo gone, Juliet wishes

for a falconer's voice
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!

The "silver-sweet" voice reaches his attending ear, "like softest music," and brings him instantly back.

Why has she stolen forth again? Partly to learn the hour when she is to send to him—partly for the fond pleasure of listening to some few more words of that "tongue's utterance." Presently she says, "I have forgot why I did call thee back." Had she anything to forget? I think not. Only bewildered with her happiness—that "sweet repose and rest" which she found within her heart—she thought she had, and owns that she *shall*

forget, to have thee still stand there
Remembering how I love thy company.

Romeo will gladly stay—"Forgetting any other home but this;" but the "night's cloak" can no longer conceal him. "'Tis almost morning." They must separate. Juliet leaves him with—

Good-night, good-night! Parting is such
sweet sorrow,
That I shall say—good-night, till it be mor-
row.

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in
thy breast!—

'Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to
rest!

But Romeo wants no sleep. His satisfied heart needs no refreshment. While yet

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning
night,
Checking the eastern clouds with streaks of
light,

he seeks the cell of Friar Laurence, who would appear to be the confessor of both

families. Upon his "Good-morrow, father!" the friar asks, "What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?" Romeo amazes the holy man by his confession that he has forgot the name of Rosaline, and explains how his

heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet.

When, and where, and how
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us to-day.

Friar. Holy Saint Francis! what a change
is here!

Romeo is made to listen to a homily for this fickleness; but the friar ends with consenting to his request, under the impression that the marriage may possibly bring to a conclusion the long feud between their families.

For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.

Juliet, meanwhile, has had to take the nurse fully into her confidence. The notion of a marriage, and a secret one, in which she herself has to play an important part, delights the heart of this conceited, silly woman. She gladly undertakes to be Juliet's messenger, and finds Romeo at the appointed hour with his friends Mercutio and Benvolio. Before her entrance, we see how entirely Romeo has cast aside the languor of the lovesick youth of the day before. When rallied by the brilliant Mercutio on his giving them "the slip" the previous night, he turns the tables on him—gives him jest for jest, so that this glib-tongued gentleman, "who loves to hear himself talk," has to call in Benvolio to help him—"Come between us, good Benvolio; my wits fail." Upon still getting the worst from Romeo, he says, "Why is not this better now than groaning for love? Now art thou sociable; now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature." Mercutio, after wasting some of his wit on the nurse, quits the scene with Benvolio. The nurse, exceedingly angered and indignant at Mercutio, can hardly be brought to give to Romeo, who does all he can to soothe her, the message from her mistress—"What she bade me say, I will keep to myself;" but Romeo's fair words, and a handsome *douceur*, which she takes after a little coquetting, bring her round, and an appointment is made for her lady to come that afternoon to Friar Laurence's cell, there to be "shrived and married." Ro-

meo also directs her to meet his man behind the abbey wall, and to get from him "cords made like a tackled stair," by which he may after dark ascend to Juliet's chamber. Before she consents to this, she is shrewd enough to require satisfaction on a very material point—

Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,
Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

We may believe that the nurse, loving much her own ease, has not, on this hot day, made her best haste back to Juliet. We hear she has been "three long hours" away—a period for which her short interview with Romeo could hardly account. We do not wonder, therefore at Juliet's impatience. When at last the nurse comes Juliet can get but little from her. The nurse feels that she is mistress of the situation, and will make the most of it. She is "awearry;" her "bones ache;" she must have "leave a while;" she will not speak to the point—"Do you not see that I am out of breath?"

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou
hast breath
To say to me that thou art out of breath?

Is thy news good or bad? answer to that;
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance.

The nurse, remembering, no doubt, Romeo's handsome gift, now bursts into an eulogium upon him. He is in all points "past compare." Then the fear of having lost her dinner startles her—"What! have you dined at home?" "No, no."

Although at another time Juliet could never weary of hearing the praises of her lover, yet now a much more urgent matter is in hand.

But all this I did know before;
What says he of our marriage? what of that?

The heartless nature of the nurse is here shown by the cruelty with which she keeps Juliet in suspense, and we cannot much wonder at the light in which she appears afterwards. It is forever herself, herself—"Lord, how my head aches!" then her back,—reproaching Juliet for the time she has herself wasted "with jaunting up and down."

When Juliet has pitied and petted her enough, she thinks she has brought her to the point; but just as she is touching it, the nurse breaks off again with, "Where's your mother?" At this, Juliet's patience gives way, and she replies angrily:—

Why, she is within;
Where should she be? How oddly thou re-
liest!

thereby only giving the nurse fresh weapons to torment her. Juliet sees that she must still be humored; and here occurs one of those passages which, with unerring instinct, Shakespeare leaves the performer to fill up by action—words being quite inadequate to carry on the scene. The caressing, winning kisses and loving ways of Juliet gradually subdue her tormentor. By this time, too, perhaps the thought of dinner becomes uppermost in the nurse's mind; and in reply to Juliet's question, "Come, what says Romeo?" she replies, coming straight to the point at last:—

Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to Friar Laurence' cell;

There stays a husband to make you a wife.

Hie you to church; . . .

Go, I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

"Hie to high fortune!—honest nurse, farewell!" exclaims Juliet, as with happy, throbbing heart she hastens away to the rite which gives her to her lover, and after which she will be free "to follow him throughout the world."

No need to dwell on the short scene which follows, when the lovers meet at Friar Laurence's cell, where the poet shows what countless wealth of love each is ready to bestow upon the other. No forebodings now from either. The "bud of love" seems swiftly to have grown into a "beauteous flower" unhindered. The swifter blighting to follow is hidden for that blessed moment from them. The friar, fearing these supposed enemies should be seen together at his cell, hurries them away into his chapel to perform the marriage rite; and "holy church incorporates two in one." After the friar's benediction they part; but only until the moon shall again be "touching with silver all the fruit-tree tops," and the nightingale shall again be "trilling her thick-warbled note" from the pomegranate-tree in a low, sweet epithalamium. Why should their bliss be dashed by fear? They have both entire faith in the friar, in his power to help them, and in good time to reconcile their friends to the marriage. He must look forward to this himself, or he would not otherwise have consented to it. Their parting, therefore, is as full of joy as their meeting had been, though of a more subdued and holier kind.

Alas for their next meeting! All seems

fair; but destiny now begins her woful work in earnest, and chooses her first victim in the person of the gallant, gay, high-spirited Mercutio, who is strolling about in the hot noonday, despite the remonstrances of his friend Benvolio.

The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,
And if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Presently comes Tybalt seeking Romeo, in order to insult and challenge him for having intruded the previous night into his uncle's house. Mercutio tries to provoke him to an encounter, but Tybalt will have none of him. At that moment Mercutio is not the man he seeks. For such a hot-blooded young gentleman he shows wondrous forbearance under Mercutio's taunts, and ends with, "Well, peace be with you, sir! here comes my man," as he catches sight of Romeo, who is coming straight from the friar's cell after the celebration of his marriage. In this mood the world to him is made of love and amity, and even the disdainfully insulting address of Tybalt cannot move him. Besides, is Tybalt not the kinsman of his love? To a coarse greeting he replies with dignity and kindness:—

Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining rage
To such a greeting: villain am I none;
Therefore, farewell; I see thou know'st me not.

Romeo's gentleness, even under renewed provocation, takes away the sting of Tybalt's wrath. He cannot as a gentleman add still further insult, but must perforce, for the time, be satisfied. Mercutio, however, who knows none of Romeo's reason for desiring to be at peace with the Capulets, calls this a "dishonorable, vile submission," and feels that he must, on his own part, wipe out the discredit with his sword. He turns furiously on Tybalt, and in a second their swords are tilting at each other's breasts. Calling on his friend to help him, and reminding the combatants that "the prince expressly hath forbidden bandying in Verona streets," Romeo interposes and beats up their weapons. This gives Tybalt an opportunity to inflict a wound on Mercutio under Romeo's arm,—after which he leaves the scene with his followers. Mercutio knows at once that he has received his death-stroke:—

I am hurt;
A plague o' both the houses! — I am sped:
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

With all his pain he never loses his wit and spirit. Romeo says:—

Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world.

Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worm's meat of me.

All the dismal consequences of this disaster, of which he is the innocent cause, at once flash upon Romeo.

This gentleman, the prince's near ally,
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
In my behalf; my reputation stained
With Tybalt's slander — Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,
And in my temper softened valor's steel!

Unluckily, while Romeo's grief is at its height, on hearing from Benvolio that Mercutio is dead, Tybalt comes back upon the scene. At the sight of the slayer of his friend, even Juliet is forgotten; and rushing with fury upon Tybalt, who has again insulted him with taunting words, Romeo kills him, and is hurried from the scene by Benvolio as the citizens rush in, presently to be followed by the prince of Verona with the heads of both the rival houses.

The prince, who has so lately issued his decree that if either of the conflicting factions should again disturb the quiet of the streets "their life shall pay the forfeit," upon hearing from Benvolio the provocation under which Romeo fought, is moved to pronounce a milder sentence:—

Let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.

Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

While all these disasters are taking place, Juliet, entirely unconscious of the difference in her fate, is revelling in joyful anticipation of the approach of night, which shall bring back Romeo:—

Come night! — Come Romeo! come thou day
in night!

For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-
browed night,

Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

So tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,
And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence.—
Now, nurse, what news?

Ah me! what news? The cruel, tire-some nurse will only wring her hands and say:—

Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
We are undone, lady, we are undone!
Alack the day!—he's gone, he's killed, he's dead!

Juliet, naturally thinking that Romeo has fallen by her kinsman's hand, — thinking too of the "little stars" which, she has just said, will at his death "make the face of heaven so fine," cries out, —

Can heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,
Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo! —
Who ever would have thought it? — Romeo!

Maddened by these exclamations, which contain no explanation, Juliet cries:—

What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus? *

This torture should be roared in dismal hell.
Hath Romeo slain himself?

Not even the anguish Juliet shows at the bare thought moves this cruel creature, who goes maundering on:—

I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes, —
God save the mark! — here on his manly breast:

* These words bring back to me an evening in Mr. Macready's drawing-room. The party was a mixed one of grown-up people and children. We had gone through many games and dances, when the game of "Proverbs" was thought of. "The devil is never so black as he is painted" was selected. The questioner, Mr. MacLise, challenged me, and I had to bring in the second word in my answer. Imagine my confusion, which, alas! every one seemed to enjoy. I was on the point of giving up, as I could think of no suitable reply to bring in the word. But when the general merriment and my despair were at their height, some one behind my chair whispered, "What did you say to the nurse last night, when she was keeping you in that cruel suspense?" In an instant I sprang up and said, "What devil art thou, that dost torment me thus?" I suppose quotations were allowed, for I was applauded, and a great deal of merriment followed. I looked round for my friendly helper, and saw Mr. Charles Dickens stealing away unsuspected by any one, and looking as though he had casually left his seat for no purpose whatever. When I thanked him afterwards for his help, he turned it off, saying the words must have come into my own head. — how should he have thought of them? This was the way he did his kindnesses — never so happy as when doing them.

A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse;
Pale, pale as ashes.

Then Juliet asks no more questions:—

O break, my heart! — poor bankrupt, break at once!

... End motion here:
And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier!

When the nurse continues:—

O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!

That ever I should live to see thee dead!

Juliet, seeing only more perplexity, more grief, exclaims:—

Is Romeo slaughtered? and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-loved cousin, and my dearest lord?

At last comes the dismal truth:—

Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
Romeo, that killed him, he is banished.

In horror Juliet asks, —

Did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day, it did!

This bare fact, without the circumstances attending it, revolts Juliet; she exclaims,

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!

... O, that deceit should dwell
In such a gorgeous palace!

Then follows the nurse's vulgar diatribe against the male sex:—

There's no trust,
No faith, no honesty in men; all perjured,
All forsworn, all nought, all dissemblers.

Shame come to Romeo!

This word applied to Romeo arouses a fiery indignation in Juliet, who turns upon her instantly with —

Blistered be thy tongue
For such a wish! he was not born to shame;
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
For 'tis a throne where honor may be crowned
Sole monarch of the universal earth.

Amazed at such a rebuke from one whom she has till now been treating as a child, the nurse can but feebly ask, —

Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?

In Juliet's answer we see that her intellect was as clear, her sense of duty to the position she had chosen as vivid, as her feelings were quick and strong.

Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,

When I, thy three-hours' wife, have mangled it?

Whoever is to blame, it cannot be her lord. She drives away her tears at the remembrance that her

husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain; And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband:

All this is comfort; wherefore weep I then?

Memory now brings back the dreadful word, which she would fain forget, "that murdered her."

Tybalt is dead, and Romeo *banished*; That *banished*, that one word *banished*, Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.

The very nurse is touched by a depth of grief such as she had never seen, and could hardly understand, and she tries to find some means of consolation.

Hie to your chamber; I'll find Romeo To comfort you:—I wot well where he is. Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night: I'll to him; he is hid in Laurence's cell.

Jul. O, find him! give this ring to my true knight, And bid him come to take his last farewell.

No word of blame, although he has killed her kinsman and destroyed their own happiness! She even sends a ring, as if desirous to bind herself more closely to him, and make a new betrothal in their affliction.

Juliet's despair has its counterpart in that of Romeo, as we next see him at the friar's cell; nay, if not deeper, it is wilder in its expression, when he learns from the friar's lips the prince's doom,—

Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. . . . Be merciful, say death; For exile hath more terror in his look, Much more than death: do not say banishment.

Vainly does the friar try to press upon him his

rude unthankfulness!

Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,

Taking thy part, hath rushed aside the law, And turned that black word death to banishment:

This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

Rom. 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here, Where Juliet lives.

The friar can neither dispute with him of his estate, nor bring "adversity's sweet milk, philosophy," to help him.

Rom. Yet banished?—Hang up philosophy Unless philosophy can make a Juliet, Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom, It helps not, it prevails not; talk no more.

Not even the arrival of the nurse, as Juliet's messenger, can arouse him from the frenzy of grief in which he has flung himself upon the ground, "taking the measure of an unmade grave." When he becomes conscious of her presence, and learns the state of his mistress, since he has "stained the childhood of their joy with blood removed but little from her own," his first impulse is to draw his sword and destroy himself. But now the friar's language rises to a higher strain:

Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art; Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote The unreasonable fury of a beast.

I thought thy disposition better tempered. Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself? And slay thy lady too that lives in thee, By doing damned hate upon thyself?

What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive, For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead: There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee, But thou slew'st Tybalt; there art thou happy too:

The law, that threatened death, became thy friend, And turned it into exile; there art thou happy: A pack of blessings lights upon thy back.

Juliet's clear intellect quickly acquires Romeo of blame for having slain Tybalt, "that would have slain her husband;" but the friar has to reason this out for Romeo, who naturally is too generous to find excuses for himself. The friar, moreover, proves no mere preacher of what the nurse calls "good counsel." He is also a man of action. He bids Romeo keep the meeting with his bride.

Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed, Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her; But look thou stay not till the watch is set, For then thou canst not pass to Mantua,

where he is to live until the friar can find a time, which he does not doubt of finding soon, to make the marriage known, reconcile the lovers' parents, turn by this "their households' rancour to pure love," secure the prince's pardon and Romeo's recall.

Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady; And bid her hasten all the house to bed, Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto: Romeo is coming.

The friar knows human nature in all its varieties, and proves a most wise and comforting counsellor to Romeo. But his sagacity has no power to foresee what is now going on in the house of the Capulets, to upset all his plans for the present and future happiness of the lovers. Remem-

bering that it is already very late, and night setting in, he suggests to Romeo that if he cannot get away from his interview with Juliet before the watch is set, he should depart in disguise by the break of day. He promises that he will find out Romeo's man, and signify through him, "from time to time every good hap to you that chances here." Romeo, repentant and deeply grateful leaves him, saying:—

But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
It were a grief so soon to part with thee:
Farewell!

Shakespeare shows his wondrous skill in dramatic construction by the brief scene which he interposes here between Lord and Lady Capulet and Paris. They have been discussing the projected marriage of their daughter, which Paris is there to press, and have been sitting late in council. The result is, that Lord Capulet has determined it shall take place:—

Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love: I think she will be ruled
In all respects by me; nay more, I doubt it not.

To his wife, who has said she will know Juliet's mind early to-morrow, as "to-night she's mew'd up to her heaviness," he says—

Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed;
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love.

O' Thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl;

quite ignoring what he has said early in the play:—

But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.

Poor Juliet! She is to be no exception to the truth, that troubles never come singly. What is thus in store is far deeper than even the anguish of parting from her lover husband. This is a woful night indeed!—this so-longed-for, much-entreated, gentle, "loving, black-browed night"!

What a prelude is this scene of cold, worldly disposing of hearts and lives to that now enacting between the lovers, which Shakespeare makes to take place on the very balcony or *loggia* which was consecrated by the first avowal of their love! In that meeting what extremes of rapture and of pain! The hour of parting has arrived. Juliet has been too much absorbed in their love and their woe to give a thought to the suit of Paris; but

in this sad hour the remembrance of it must doubtless have come upon her, and seemed to separate her still further from her husband. She will not add to the burthen of his grief by confiding to him this trouble, and all the persecution that it may bring upon her. All is bad enough without; yet this adds a special terror to his going. It cannot be that day is so near at hand. The same nightingale, whose song had sounded so sweetly in their ears the previous night, had been singing in the same pomegranate-tree. Yet how different the sound! And now another strain strikes harshly on their ears. The lark, the herald of the morn, is carolling its glad note as it "mounts up on high." How cruel is its joy! Their days will all seem nights until they meet again. Seeing that

Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops,

Romeo sadly says, "I must be gone and live, or stay and die." Juliet will not believe in the so rapid approach of day. They seem hardly to have met.

Yon light is not daylight; . . .
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone.

Romeo, who is willing to risk all to remain even for a short time near her, exclaims:

I'll say, yon grey is not the morning's eye;

Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heavens so high above our heads.

Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul? let's talk, it is not day.

Upon the word "*death*," Juliet at once realizes the risk he is running, and hurries him away. "O, now be gone; more light and light it grows." The nurse comes to caution them that the "day is broke," and to tell Juliet that her lady mother is coming to her chamber.

Oh the cry of the poor, forlorn heart when Romeo has descended the ladder of ropes and she sees him there, where the day before he had looked up in the rapture of hope under the same grey morning light! "Art thou gone so, love, lord—ay, husband, friend?" Ever, when I acted this scene, these words came from me like the cry of my own heart, and all that followed seemed the very voice of my own "ill-divining soul."

Jul. O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

Rom. I doubt it not; and all these woes
shall serve

For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. O God! I have an ill-divining soul:
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.

And it is thus alone that her eyes ever
again behold him!

To add to her almost unbearable misery, now comes in her mother, who shows some surprise at finding her daughter up at so late an hour, and drowned in tears. "Why, how now, Juliet?" "Madam, I am not well." No sympathy comes from the cold mother, who only says, somewhat sarcastically:—

Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?

Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child—
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I looked not for.

... Early next Thursday morn,
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The county Paris, at Saint Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Juliet, affrighted, amazed at this sudden woe and peril, replies angrily—

Now, by Saint Peter's church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.
I wonder at this haste; that I must wed
Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
I pray you tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet.

Probably a little doubtful how his young daughter may take the news of such hasty nuptials, but not questioning her assent in the end, even if he should have to delay them somewhat, Capulet follows with the nurse to her chamber. To his amazement, his wife tells him that Juliet will not hear of the arrangement, "she will none" of it, adding, "I would the fool were married to her grave!" Does she think of this hereafter? Capulet's indignation knows no bounds.

Is she not proud? doth she not count her
bless'd,

Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Juliet on her knees entreats her father to hear her "with patience but to speak a word." But he grows hotter and hotter at finding determined opposition where he had looked for little. The nurse is rebuked for taking Juliet's part and saying, "You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so." "And why, my lady wisdom?

Hold your tongue!" And he leaves Juliet with this threat:—

Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i' the
streets,

For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:
Trust to't, bethink you I'll not be forsworn.

Juliet in her anguish cries out:—

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?

Then turns to her mother with the agonized appeal:—

O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!
Delay this marriage for a month, a week;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies!

Prophetic words, which might well have startled the formal mother's ears; but she replies in feeble imitation of her husband, and in language which sounds more shocking than his, because not spoken in hot passion:—

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word;
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

And now only the nurse remains. She at least is sure. She is her own, and never could desert her foster-child, whom she nursed, and who took the place of her own Susan, "who is with God." Juliet turns to her as her last but certain comfort:—

O nurse, how shall this be prevented?

Alack, alack, that heaven should practise
stratagems

Upon so soft a subject as myself!
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse!

Alas for Juliet! Comfort from a creature so shallow-hearted, so selfish, so untrue! We see that the nurse has been pondering over the situation. The parents are not to be moved. To confess to them the part she has played in the secret marriage is not to be thought of. She would lose the home which she looks upon as her own for life, and be sent from it in disgrace. The young girl cannot help her; why should she, therefore, risk comfort and respectability on her account? She knows nothing of "the marriage of true minds"—of the heaven-given impulse, which has drawn the lovers together; the love "that looks on tempests and is never shaken;" the feeling that in Juliet consecrates her person, as it has bound her

soul, to Romeo. No! The conclusion she comes to and the counsel she gives is, that

Romeo
Is banished: and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge
you;

Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.

Then, to reassure and encourage Juliet, as she stands in dumb astonishment:—

O, he's a lovely gentleman!

... An eagle, madam,
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye,
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
I think you are happy in this second match,
For it excels your first.

All my blood seemed to be forced back upon my heart as I listened to these words. I grew as stone when she went on to descant upon the praises of Paris in contrast with Romeo. What can be said in answer to such words, such comfort, such counsel? I have often been startled at the sad solemnity of my own tones, as I put the question, "Speakest thou from thy heart?" and in the very significant "Amen!" which follows her reply—"From my soul too, or else beshrew them both."

Juliet's hope, her trust in the one on whose devotion she felt assured she might rely, is at an end, and now she sees, as never before, the nurse's character in its true light. Stolid as the nurse is, and incapable of any finer feeling, yet we see, by her startled "What? what?" that she notes the difference in Juliet's tone and manner. For the first time Juliet assumes her position as mistress towards her, and after the half-sarcastic "Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous much," orders her to go in and tell her mother that she has gone, having displeased her father, to Friar Laurence's cell, "to make confession, and to be absolved."

Alas, again, for Juliet! The familiar ground which she has trodden and trusted to all her life taken from under her, and she left standing alone—cast off by all within her home! Worse than cast away by the nurse, who knows all her trouble, and would have her meet it in this despicable manner! She makes no remonstrance: no further appeal could be made to such a creature. Her tears are dried, and she stands erect in her desolation. Alone she must face the future—a future steeped in gloom. The child's trust in

others falls from her: "her soul springs up astonished—springs full-statured in an hour." She is henceforth the determined woman. She will not condescend to bandy more words with the nurse—who, being incapable of understanding her nature, does not deserve her consideration—yet when alone her pent-up indignation and scorn find a way to her lips:—

O most wicked fiend!
Is it more sin to wish thee thus forsworn;
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
Which she hath praised him with above compare

So many thousand times? Go, counsellor—
Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.

Whatever happens, their lives are henceforth separate. Rather than follow such counsel she will die! In this supreme moment she has formed her resolution. "I'll to the friar, to know his remedy." Then remembering and possessing herself of the dagger which had been the toy of her happy hours, she adds:—

If all else fail, myself have power to die.

It is for the actress, in this marvellous and most difficult scene, to show, by her look and manner, how everything that is girlish and immature,—all that, under happy circumstances, would have marked the gentle, clinging nature of youth,—falls off from Juliet, and how she is developed into the heroic woman as rapidly as Romeo, when possessed by a genuine passion, rises from the dreaming youth to the full stature of a noble manhood.

This difference is plainly marked in her dignified treatment of Paris, whom she finds before her at the friar's cell. The nurse's praises, still sounding in her ears, make him particularly unwelcome to her. He evidently thinks her father's sanction to their marriage is all-sufficient, and with self-complacent impertinence treats her as though she were already his property. Juliet's curt and somewhat sarcastic answers to his questions should have shown him how distasteful he was to her; but he believes himself an acceptable suitor for any lady. Even her evident impatience to get rid of him tells him nothing. He chooses to believe that her confession to the friar is partly made on his account.

Par. Do not deny to him that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

After a little more of this fencing, Juliet, seeing that he will not leave them, turns

to the friar, "Are you at leisure, holy father, now?" Such a hint cannot but be taken, and Paris leaves her with the promise:—

Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse you:
Till then, adieu!

No sooner is the door shut upon him, than she finds that through Paris the friar is already acquainted with her grief; "it strangles me," he says, "past the compass of my wits." The friar can hardly be prepared to find how rapidly the extremity which has so suddenly come upon Juliet has developed her character. The determined, resolute composure which she shows could alone have encouraged him to suggest to her the desperate remedy which is the only "kind of hope" he has to offer her.

Jul. God joined my heart and Romeo's,
thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo sealed,
Shall be the label to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.

Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

The friar must see how ready she is to sacrifice the life consecrated to her lover; and he at once explains that the only escape he had been able to devise was a desperate and terrible one. But if she be prepared, as she says, to face death itself, she may not hesitate to undertake "a thing like death to chide away this shame."

In her answer Juliet proclaims with passionate vehemence her readiness to face such terrors as he might think would affright her most, if only she may live "an unstained wife to her true lord." There is such proof of earnest purpose in this, that the friar no longer hesitates to lay his device before her. She is in no way appalled by the thought of being laid for dead for a certain time in her ancestral tomb. Is she not assured that by the time she will awake, her Romeo, summoned by the friar, will be by her side, and bear her thence "that very night to Mantua"?

If no unconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
Abate thy valor in the acting it.

"Give me, give me! O tell me not of fear," she exclaims, as she seizes the phial: "Love, give me strength!" What strength love gives her we are soon to see—love true and unwavering as that she plighted in the words:—

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But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be
strange.

Lord Capulet, unused to be thwarted, must be in a fever of impatience to know what effect the friar's admonitions have had upon his wayward daughter, in whom he now traces some of his own imperious will. His surprise and delight, therefore, know no bounds when she returns apparently contrite and ready to obey his will—nay, as willing as himself to expedite matters.

Send for the county; go tell him of this:
I'll have this knot tied up to-morrow morning.

Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
All our whole city is much bound up in him.

Juliet says:—

Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
To help me sort such needful ornaments
As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

Lady Capulet, wishing to keep to the original day, breaks in with, "No, not till Thursday; there is time enough." Lord Capulet, most anxious to take Juliet while in the vein, exclaims, "Go, nurse, go with her; we'll to church to-morrow." Still Lady Capulet remonstrates:—

We shall be short in our provision;
'Tis now near night.

Cap. Tush! I will stir about,
And all things shall be well, I warrant, wife:
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck her up;
I'll not to bed to-night.

My heart is wondrous light,
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed.

Juliet is now in her chamber, and has let the nurse choose any dress she pleases for the intended ceremony on the morrow. "Ay, those attires are best." The same, doubtless, that she was really robed in for her grave. She must be at peace now, even with the treacherous woman who had so failed her in her utmost need, for this is their last meeting. She asks the nurse to leave her,—

For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of
sin.

Lady Capulet comes in to inquire if her help is needed. Juliet replies that all is ready, and asks to be left alone, adding:—

And let the nurse this night sit up with you,
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

Lady Capulet, who sees nothing in her

daughter's change of manner but what she considers natural in the situation — wrought in her, doubtless, by the good friar's spiritual advice and counsel — bids her good-night in the usual way, only adding, as she knew Juliet had been waking and weeping all the previous night, "Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need."

With what awe, with what dread fascination, I used to approach what follows! I always felt a kind of icy coldness and stillness come over me after leaving the friar's cell, which lasted until this moment. The "Farewell!" to Lady Capulet, — "God knows when we shall meet again," — relaxed this state of tension. When I knelt to my father, I had mutely, in kissing his hand, taken leave of him; but now my mother — the mother whose sympathy would have been so precious — was leaving me to my lonely despair. This breaking up of all natural ties of youth and home, the heart-sick feeling of desolation, overpowered me, and sobs came against my will. The very room looked strange, larger, darker, with but the faint light of the lamp, which threw the recesses of the windows and the heavy furniture into deeper shade. I used to take up the lamp and peer into the shadows, to try to take away their terror. Already I could fancy I had descended into the vault.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life.

There was no enduring it: "I'll call them back again to comfort me; nurse!" No! I have forgot. "What should she do here?" No one must know, — "my dismal scene I needs must act alone." Hitherto all has been as the friar ordered: his instructions have been faithfully carried out. Now Juliet stands, for the first time, alone, to think over and to face what is to follow. She does not waver, but she has to put before herself the dread realities which must be encountered in the way of the escape devised for her. The hush of the unaccustomed solitude is strange, for the nurse has been always near her until this night. Things undreamt of take possession of her brain. A swift, sudden death, such as she had pictured to the friar, would have no terror; but slow horrors seem now to gather round her.

Suppose the mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?

No! There is a remedy against that.
The dagger is kept near her heart, and

will find its place in it if necessary. Then again, it may be a poison subtly administered by the friar, lest he should be dishonored, "because he married me before to Romeo." This thought is put aside at once as unworthy — "for he hath still been tried a holy man." But now imagination conjures up a much more terrible vision, and such as might appal the bravest heart: —

How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me?

This is indeed "a fearful point!" She has seen the outside of the family vault; the space remaining cannot be large, it being already full of her kindred, who have been buried there for "many hundred years." Remembering the custom of burying the corpse uncovered on the bier, to fall bit by bit into decay, the air, such air as may find its way in, laden with the odors of decaying mortality, may stifle her, — nay, the foul mouth of the vault is not large enough to let in the "healthsome air," and she will "there die strangled ere her Romeo comes." Or if not — if she should live — how is she to endure

The horrible conceit of death and night,
Together with the terror of the place, —

Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,
Lies festered in his shroud?*

Horror accumulates upon horror. Wandering spirits resort to such spots. What with loathsome smells, the shrieks of mandrakes torn out of the earth, she will go mad

Environed with all these hideous fears.

And in this rage, with some great kinsman's
bone,
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains!

For the moment the great fear gets the better of the great love, and all seems madness. Then in her frenzy of excitement she seems to see Tybalt's figure start into life: —

Look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo! . . .

Stay, Tybalt, stay!

At the mention of Romeo's name, I used to feel all my resolution return. Romeo! She goes to meet him, and what terror shall hold her back? She will pass through the horror of hell itself to reach what lies beyond; and she swallows the

* I could never utter these words without an exclamation of shuddering disgust escaping with them.

potion with his name upon her lips —
 "Romeo, I drink to thee!"

What a scene is this — so simple, so grand, so terrible! What it is to act I need not tell you. What power it demands, and yet what restraint! To be tame would be to make the words ridiculous. The voice must be as capable of variety of expression as are the words, — the action simple, strong, impressive. Certainly, repetition had no effect in making the scene less vivid to my imagination. The last time I played Juliet, which was in Manchester in 1871, I fainted on the bed at the end of it, so much was I overcome with the reality of the "thick-coming fancies," — just as the first time I played the part I had fainted at the sight of my own blood, which, for the moment, seemed to make the scene all too real. I am not given to fainting, and indeed I have very rarely known the sensation. But the fascination which the terrible had for me from the first, it maintained to the last; and as the images which the poet suggests rose in cumulative horror before my mind, the stronger imagination of riper years gave them, no doubt, a greater power over my nervous system, and for the time overcame me. I know no scene in Shakespeare more difficult. Three such scenes for the actress in one play — the balcony scene, the scene when Juliet hears of Romeo's banishment, and this! Alas! who could hope to do them the faintest justice?

While the daughter of the house is contending with the horrors that crowd on her imagination at the thought of the "nest of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep," in which she is presently to be laid, Shakespeare, with a Rembrandt-like effect of contrast, lets us see a little of the busy life which is in the mean time going on in the background through the night in the bustle of preparation for these hasty nuptials. Day is breaking, yet Capulet has not been in bed: —

Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath crowed,
 The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock.

While Lady Capulet and the nurse are equally active in getting "spices and quinces" for the operations of the kitchen, servants are seen moving to and fro with spits, logs, and baskets.

Cap. Now, fellow, what's there?

First Servant. Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste! Sirrah, fetch drier logs.

The county will be here with music straight,
 For so he said he would. I hear him near.

The nurse is despatched in haste to Juliet to waken her, and "trim her up." All this stir and bustle of festal preparation the prelude to the hushed solemnity of death! What a picture meets the eyes of the stricken parents, the faithless nurse, the assured and triumphant bridegroom! Knowing what Friar Laurence does of them and their poor victims, well may he cut short their selfish lamentations by the words: —

The heavens do lour upon you for some ill, —
 Move them no more by crossing their high will.

The close of the fourth act leaves us in uncertainty, but still with a kind of hope that all these woes may serve "for sweet discourses in the time to come." There seems to be no necessity for a tragic ending. Romeo is safe in Mantua, awaiting, with all the patience he can, the news which the friar is to send him through his man from time to time of "every good hap that chances here." Friar John has been sent to him with all speed with a letter apprising him of what has just happened — a letter which will bring him back on the instant to Verona. Juliet is safe from her parents' importunity in the "pleasant sleep" which is to end in such a happy waking. All seems to go well.

But now destiny steps in again. The fates are spinning, spinning out the doom of the lovers, and will not be thwarted.

The fifth act of this play has always impressed me as being wonderfully beautiful, — simple, human, and grand as the finest of the Greek plays; much finer, indeed, for the ancients knew nothing of the passion of love in its purity, its earnestness, its devotedness, its self-sacrifice. It needed Christianity to teach us this, and a Shakespeare in the drama to illustrate it. The Greek dramatists, as a rule, preserved the unities of time, place, and action. Shakespeare put them aside for higher purposes. His genius could not be so trammelled. Human lives and human minds he took to work upon, and made all outside matter subservient to his great end. Time, space, action, were his instruments, and he made them submit to him. He looked to the "beyond beyond," where no time is, and would not subject himself to mere days and hours, which at the best come and go unheeded, some flying, others dragging their weary length along.

In the opening of the act we meet Romeo in Mantua. Grief has matured, ennobled him. He is full of buoyant hopes because of a happy dream. In the first act, before he goes to the revels, he says, "Tis no wit to go. I dreamt a dream to-night." This dream was of a kind evidently to set him against going to the house of his enemy. But, following on this dream of warning, comes the greatest joy of his life. The present dream supposes, curiously, that he, instead of his lady, was lying dead, and that her kisses breathed such new life into him that he "revived, and was an emperor." Now, in the climax of this joyful anticipation comes Balthazar with news from Verona. Has he brought letters from the friar? No. Then,

How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? That I ask again,
For nothing can be ill if she be well.

Bal. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.

Her body sleeps in Capel's monument,
And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault.

Romeo's grief is of that overwhelming kind which finds no vent in words. He simply says, "Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!" But on the instant he sees his course. He gives a few brief directions to his servant to hire post-horses, and dismisses him with renewed injunctions—"And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight." What a change the shock has wrought upon him in a moment is seen in Balthazar's words!—

I do beseech you, sir, have patience;
Your looks are pale and wild.

Romeo asks no questions, seeks for no details. In the anguish of a sudden blow it is not the greatest sufferer who wants to know particulars. The "why?" the "when?" the "where?" come from others less deeply stricken. The thought may pass through Romeo's mind of the pale face he has last looked upon in the anguish of parting. "Dry sorrow" has indeed "drunk her blood" and snapped her life's strings.

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.
Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift

To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!

Swift—too swift; for already destiny had thrown the means across his path.

I do remember an apothecary,
And hereabouts he dwells. . . .

Noting his penury, to myself I said—
An if a man did need a poison now,

Here lives a catiff wretch would sell it him.
O, this same thought did but forerun my need!

Come, cordial, and not poison; go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

With what a subtle touch Shakespeare reveals to us the state of Romeo's mind during his hurried night-ride to Verona! for, as an exiled man, he must still use "night's cloak" to hide him from men's eyes. His man, thinking the details of what had happened in Verona deeply interesting, would fain tell him all,—spare his master nothing of the elaborate ceremony which he had witnessed of Juliet's entombment, or of the gossip which he has heard around of the unusual sadness of the event—of her youth, her beauty, and of the day on which she died having been appointed for her marriage with the rich county Paris. But Romeo heeds nothing. One all-absorbing thought possesses him—to hasten on and lie by Juliet's side in death.

The next scene shows us how the fates have been at work, using the plague which was then raging in part of Verona as an instrument of their will. Friar John, while seeking the "associate" who was to accompany him to Verona, is found in a house suspected of infection, and is shut up there, so that he can neither send on to Mantua the letter intrusted to him, nor get it returned to Friar Laurence. He brings it back after this delay, when the time for it to be of use has long gone by. "Unhappy fortune!" says Friar Laurence; but as he evidently thought Romeo could not have heard what had happened through any other channel, he proposes to write again to him, and in the mean time to bring Juliet away on her awaking, and keep her at his cell.

On Romeo's arrival at the churchyard, he finds Paris there before him, strewing the tomb with flowers. Paris has loved Juliet to the best of his nature, and mourns her in a gentle, sentimental way: Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew:

The obsequies that I for thee will keep,
Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave and weep.
He retires when his page warns him of the approach of Romeo; but on witnessing what he supposes to be desecration of the tomb of the Capulets, he breaks in with—

Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee!

Romeo proves his gentle, noble nature by showing the same forbearance to Paris with which he had met the insolence of Tybalt.

Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man;

Fly hence and leave me. . . .
I beseech thee, youth,
Heap not another sin upon my head,
By urging me to fury! — O, begone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself;
For I come hither armed against myself.

Paris will not be persuaded, and Romeo is not to be balked. They fight, and it is only when Paris has fallen that he is recognized by Romeo as "Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris." Then something crosses his mind as to what his man had talked of on the road —

When my betossed soul
Did not attend him on the road? I think,
He told me, Paris should have married Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?

To the man who would have been his foe alive, he can say in death: —

O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.

For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.

We may conceive the anguish of the cry that now breaks from him: —

O, my love! my wife!
Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy
breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.

"The roses on her lips and cheeks," which under the first influence of the potion had faded "to paly ashes," have begun to return, as its effects are dying away. How much is the pathos of the scene deepened by the circumstance that Romeo sees nothing in this to make him hesitate! He thinks only that "beauty's ensign" is still "crimson in her lips and in her cheeks," and that for a while "death's pale flag is not advanced there." He now sees what she had truly pictured to herself, the body of Tybalt "uncovered on the bier" close beside her. Ever generous and forgiving himself, he turns to ask the forgiveness of his foe: —

Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favor can I do to thee,
Than with that hand which cut thy youth in
twain,
To sunder his that was thine enemy?

Forgive me, cousin! — Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? . . .

Here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids; O,
here

Will I set up my everlasting rest;
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh.

Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavory guide!

Here's to my love!

Even so had it been with Juliet before —
"Romeo, I drink to thee."

While this is going on at the tomb of the Capulets, and on the very instant of Romeo's exclamation, "O true apothecary, thy drugs are quick! Thus with a kiss I die," — Friar Laurence enters at the far end of the churchyard, with a crowbar and all the materials for opening the monument. As he makes his way towards it he says, groping his way along:

Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves.

Romeo's man, who has been enjoined, at peril of his life, to keep aloof, tells the friar of Romeo's advent at the tomb. The friar's worst fears are aroused by this, —

Fear comes upon me:
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

He calls on Romeo's name; finds the sepulchre open, and at the entrance of it, "masterless and gory swords." Entering he sees —

Romeo! O, pale! — Who else? what, Paris
too?
And steeped in blood?

Before he has recovered the shock of this discovery Juliet awakes "as from a pleasant sleep." Her first sight is of the friar. This is as she was promised. Her brain is clear, her memory active.

O comfortable friar, where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. — Where is my Romeo?

Noises in the distance tell the friar that the watch is approaching.

Lady, come from that nest
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep:
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents; come, come away.

Is it likely when he adds: —

Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead.
. . . Come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.

What a moment for Juliet! She has braved all the horrors which her imagination so vividly pictured, for the sake of him who now lies dead before her. She has wakened for this! She has no questions, no words. Her heart is bankrupt utterly. If she can think at all, it is that Romeo has found her dead, and, to follow her quickly, has taken poison. She finds the phial closed tightly in his hand. She utters no reproaches, except the loving one:—

O churl! drink all; and leave no friendly drop,
To help me after!

The poor old friar, in his grief and utter bewilderment at this "lamentable chance," finding all his efforts fruitless to tear Juliet from her husband's body, as the noise of the approaching crowd comes nearer, at last leaves her. Juliet, glad of the release, says, "Go, get thee hence, for I will not away." The noise comes nearer still. To be found alive would be to be separated from her lover. The dagger, which was to have been her friendly help to let out life, should the potion not have worked, is not at hand—has not been buried with her. Where can she look for help? Will her desperate hand have indeed to seek some kinsman's bone with which to dash out her brains? No! The "inconstant moon" is a friendly helper now; it breaks through the darkness, and shows the glittering of Romeo's dagger. Here is relief! To die by the instrument which had touched his own hand, had been part of his daily wearing and belongings—nothing could be more welcome. She snatches it from his body, exclaiming, as she stabs herself, "O happy dagger! this is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die."

Thus is the "fearful passage of their death-marked love" complete. Had Shakespeare only wished to show true love constant and triumphant throughout persistent evil fortune, he might have ended here. But, as I said in the outset, his purpose, I believe, was far wider and deeper, and is plainly shown in the elaborate close which he has written to the scene.

The play opens in the thronged streets of Verona,—perhaps in its picturesque and stirring market-place,—where, upon a casual meeting, the hot blood of the retainers of the Montagues and Capulets, made hotter by the blazing noonday sun, breaks out into a bloody brawl, into the midst of which, when at its height, the heads of both the houses rush with a pas-

sion little suited to their years, and are reduced to order only by the intervention of their prince. It closes in the chill midnight, in a churchyard. The actors in the first scene are all present except the kind Lady Montague, who has died of grief that very night for her son's exile; and there, locked in each other's arms in death, lie these two fair young creatures done to death by reason "of their parents' rage."

Too late—too late for their happiness on earth—do these parents learn the lesson of amity and brotherly love over the dumbly eloquent bodies of their imolated children. But they do, with stricken hearts, learn it, and try vainly to make expiation. All future generations also may learn it there, for never could the lesson be more emphatically taught, as of a surety

There never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

There is in this play no scope for surmise, no possible misunderstanding of the chief characters or of the poet's purpose, such as there are in "Hamlet" and "Macbeth." The chill mists and vapors of the north seem to shroud these plays in an atmosphere of mystery, uncertainty, and gloom. But here all is distinct and luminous as the vivid sunshine, or the clear, tender moonlight of the South. You have but to throw your mind back into the history of the time, and to let your heart warm and your imagination kindle with the hot blood and quick-flashing fancies of the Italian temperament, and the whole tale of love and woe stands fully revealed before you. Still, to judge Juliet rightly, we must have clear ideas of Romeo, of her parents, and of all the circumstances that determined her conduct. What I have written, therefore, has been written with this object. Would I might think that in my art I was in some measure able to express what my imagination had conceived of Juliet in her brief hours of exquisite happiness and exquisite suffering!

HELENA FAUCIT MARTIN.

To Mrs. S. C. HALL.

[The second of these letters was not completed when tidings of the death, after a very brief illness, of the dear friend for whom it was intended, reached me. She was present to my mind when I wrote it, and I dedicate it to her memory. The world knew her great talents and her worth; but only her friends could esti-

mate her goodness, her charity in thought as well as in deed. Her kindness, like her sympathy, knew no limit. It was as constant and loyal, as it was encouraging and judicious. In loving, grateful memory she lives, I doubt not, in many hearts, as she does in mine.]

From Fraser's Magazine.

ROBERT SOUTHEY AND CAROLINE BOWLES.*

ALTHOUGH there is much in this volume which we have read with interest, the first reflection it suggests springs from the fragility of second-class literary reputations. They remind us of the photographs of departed friends, to be met with in most collections, which fade insensibly, losing year by year something of their freshness and life, until they become the shadow of a shade, and vanish quite away. Such has been the fate of the accomplished lady who shared so long and so largely in the friendship of Robert Southey, and at length became his wife. Of the readers of the present generation who may open this volume or glance over these pages, we question whether one in a thousand has ever so much as heard of "Emily FitzArthur" or "The Birthday," or of the numerous contributions of Miss Bowles to *Blackwood*, or to the "Keepsakes" and other annuals of a former age. Yet she was ranked high amongst the literary characters of that time by her contemporaries. Henry Nelson Coleridge styled her "the Cowper of our modern poetesses," and Southey himself speaks of her in "The Doctor" as "Caroline Bowles, whom no authoress or author has ever surpassed in tenderness and sanctity of feeling." These are the expressions of enthusiastic friendship and warm affection; they are not criticism, and they shrivel into dust beneath the touch of time. In spite of the meritorious effort of Mr. Dowden to revive these memorials of the past, he must be well aware that the sentence of oblivion cannot be reversed; Miss Bowles cannot claim so much as a page in Mr. Ward's charming selections from modern poetry, and she will be remembered—if she be remembered at all—as the friend and

wife of Southey. In justice to her modest, unassuming character it must be added that she herself would have desired no other or higher fame.

The literary reputation of Robert Southey stood, and still stands, on a far loftier pedestal; amongst his contemporaries few had risen higher. Landor justly said of him, "Never in the course of my existence have I known a man so excellent on so many points." Coleridge compared him to Marcus Cato as the man "likest virtue." Sir Henry Taylor, who still bears a living testimony to the merits of his friend, goes so far as to declare that, "although there were greater poets in his generation, men of a deeper and more far-reaching philosophic faculty, it may be said of him justly, and with no straining of the truth, that of all his contemporaries he was the greatest MAN." Southey himself, who was not wanting in self-assertion, did not hesitate to claim a place in the foremost rank of a great literary age—the age which produced Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. With the utmost respect for his memory, both on account of his private virtues and his literary talents and industry, this verdict cannot be supported against the judgment of the next generation and of posterity. The reputation of most of the men we have just named has extended and increased—that of Southey has prodigiously declined; indeed, when we consider his power of imagination, and his command of poetical language, as displayed in "Roderick" and "Thalaba" and in some of his early ballads—when we recall his vast reading, his pure and correct style, his indefatigable industry for nearly half a century in every branch of prose composition—we are astonished that the ultimate result should be so small. Probably none of the best writers of the earlier years of this century is now so little read. His poems are almost forgotten, his greatest literary labors are unknown, and were not always completed. Probably the "Life of Nelson"—a small volume, but a real classic—will survive all its weightier congeners, and "The Holly Tree" will retain a place in the poetical miscellanies of the future. Nothing could be more unlike the position which Southey conceived his own works to occupy, than that to which they have already descended. Nobody would dream of republishing any of them; they scarcely appear as vendible commodities in the catalogues of the second-hand booksellers.

It would carry us too far from our im-

* *The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles, to which are added Correspondence with Shelley, and Southey's Dreams.* Edited, with an Introduction, by Edward Dowden, Professor of English Literature in the University of Dublin. Dublin and London: 1891.

mediate purpose to investigate the causes of this failure. There is a good deal in the letters to Miss Bowles that tends to explain it; but nothing to mitigate the severity of the sentence. They exhibit the charm of Southey's private character, his affectionate disposition, his firm and zealous friendship, his simple tastes, his purity and piety of thought and life. But they also display the asperity and intolerance of his literary judgments, his bitterness towards those from whom he differed, and his indulgence to his own crotchets and opinions, to which he clung with the spirit of infallibility. Nothing could be more amiable than his relations to Miss Bowles, governed by the tenderness of a friendship which ripened into love. But in the course of a long correspondence, whilst they deal in profuse compliments to one another, they contrive to distribute pretty severe blows to every one else. We shall quote some of these passages, which are amusing and characteristic.

Byron and Jeffrey were two of Southey's "favorite aversions," as the phrase runs. Although he boasts that he is "irritable to any attacks through the press," he adds:—

"When I have taken occasion to handle Jeffrey, or found it necessary to take up the pen against Lord Byron, it has been more with a feeling of strength than of anger—something like Rumpelstiltzchen feels when he lays his paw upon a rat." Rumpelstiltzchen was his favorite cat. The sentence is not only absurd but ungrammatical. The pronoun "what" is left out, probably by accident. But Rumpelstiltzchen might have found such rats as Byron and Jeffrey too strong for his claws. In the eyes of Southey Lord Byron was simply "a bad man."

In 1824, when Southey was busily engaged on his "History of the Peninsular War," Miss Bowles informed him with regret that another history of that war was in preparation under the auspices of the Duke of Wellington. The work thus announced is obviously Sir William Napier's immortal narrative. To this Southey replies:—

Your news is new to me; but it does not surprise, and can in no degree injure me. Indeed, I do not think it will affect Murray's interest, who is the person interested; for the intended work will prove a military history exclusively. The duke refused to communicate any papers to me, upon the ground that he reserved them for such a work. He said that I should do as every one who wished to make a popular work would—ascrive more

to the Spaniards than was due to them. In this he is mistaken. But the truth is he wants a whole-length portrait of himself, and not an historical picture in which a great many other figures must be introduced. By good fortune I have had access to papers of his of a much more confidential nature than he himself (I am very sure) would entrust to any one. And I have only to wish the work which he patronizes may come out as soon as possible, that I may make use of it. For my third volume, in all likelihood, it will come in time, and then it will save me some trouble, for I may rely upon its authority in mere military points. This must be the reason why Murray announces my second volume so prematurely, when only twenty-six sheets are printed out of a hundred. I shall neither hurry myself nor be hurried. And you need not be told that I shall everywhere speak of the duke exactly as I should have done if he had behaved towards me with more wisdom. *Let who may write the military history, it is in my book that posterity will read of his campaigns.* And if there had been nothing but a military interest in the story, the duke might have written it for me.

The Duke of Wellington appears to have judged Southey's qualifications as a military historian more correctly than Southey himself, and a pen of a very different *trempe* was chosen to record his exploits: Southey sinking into the very abasement of self-delusion, and unconscious of the melancholy fate which awaited his own quartos.

Of Dean Milman he says:—

The paper on Milman I have not read, caring too little for any such subject. I know Milman, who spent a summer here some years ago. He was then a little spoilt by Etonism, and has since been more so by admiration, fashionable society, and prosperity.

So much for the author of the "History of Latin Christianity," which will certainly outlive Southey's "History of the Peninsular War."

Mr. Hallam does not fare better. Of him Southey writes:—

To-day I returned the proofs of the severest criticism I have ever written. It is upon Hallam's "Constitutional History," a book composed in the worst temper and upon the worst principles. It contains even a formal justification of the murder of Lord Strafford. I am acquainted with the author, and should, therefore, have abstained from this act of justice upon him, if he had not called it forth by some remarks in his notes upon the "Book of the Church," which take from him all right of complaint. You will see I can be angry, not on my own score, because any attack on that book only serves to prove its strength, etc.

Yet, if we are not mistaken, Hallam's

"Constitutional History" survives even Mr. Southey's "Book of the Church."

Mr. Southey's notion of Lord John Russell was that "he scruples at no subterfuge and no falsehood that will serve his purpose for a time"—not exactly what is commonly thought of Lord Russell!

Poor Mrs. Barbauld, with her exquisite delicacy and warmth of feeling, is described as "cold as her creed," because she happened to be a Unitarian; and "her niece, Miss Lucy Aikin," when I saw her (which was before she commenced historian!), *pert as a pear-monger*." What that may be we do not know. It might be supposed that a "pear-monger" is a person who sells pears. We fail to see the point of the comparison.

Charles Lamb, Mrs. Opie, Hannah More, Charles Butler, William Howitt, Hayley, Charlotte Brontë, and a multitude of other excellent and accomplished persons come in for some of these rough touches of Southey's pen, and Miss Bowles is never behindhand in administering a few pin-pricks in her small way. It is melancholy to think what backbiting and slander very good people are apt to indulge in at the expense of their fellow-creatures. Southey, it seems, with characteristic blindness, wished this correspondence to be published for the benefit of future ages; but his representatives have shown but little judgment in giving it to the light. Many passages leave a bitter taste in the mouth, and we doubt whether any portion of it will raise Southey's reputation or give a reputation to Miss Bowles.

On all questions connected with politics and religion, Southey labored under insuperable prejudices and a rank intolerance. His standard of excellence appears to have been the Georgian age. On the death of that excellent monarch, King George IV., in 1830, he exclaims:—

There is something melancholy in having seen the end of the Georges, the Georgian age having been in part the happiest, in part the most splendid, and altogether the most momentous age in our history. We are entering upon a new one, and with no happy auspices.

To a mind so constituted the era which was ushered in by the accession of William IV. and the Reform Bill, was not a time of promise and delight. Accordingly, Southey's letters betray the terrors of a Tory mad with fright. He believes that there is a plot of *sans-culottes* to murder the king and the duke on their way into

the City. He doubts whether he can make his way to Coutts's bank in the Strand with a 100*l.* cheque in his pocket. The end of all things is at hand. We make all allowances for an elderly literary gentleman whose nerves are shaken, and whose head is not very strong. But we have some difficulty in discovering in all this Sir Henry Taylor's GREAT MAN.

The personal relations of Mr. Southey and Miss Bowles are always pleasing, especially when they speak of their black-birds, their nuthatches, and their favorite cats. For both of them had a keen sense of the charm and beauty of nature, and a strong yearning for domestic affection. But the objects of domestic affection were denied them; for Miss Bowles was a solitary woman, and Southey's hearth and home were overcast by the illness of his wife. Hence they derived an unbroken pleasure from a sympathetic correspondence carried on between the hills of Westmoreland and the borders of the New Forest, but they rarely met. Their intimacy began in 1818 by a humble appeal on the part of Miss Bowles that the great Mr. Southey "would devote some leisure hour to the perusal of a manuscript, hardly to be called a poem"—for Miss Bowles always speaks very modestly of her own performances. Southey not only read but admired; for he was touched by the graceful and flattering letter which accompanied the poem, though the sterner judgment of Mr. Murray declined the publication of it. But the basis of a lifelong friendship was laid, which was of far more importance. Southey's opinion of Miss Bowles's literary powers was so high that he proposed to her in 1823 a "literary union," the offspring of which was to be a joint poem, written after the manner of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, on the legend of "Robin Hood," seeing, as he says, no just cause or impediment why R. S. and C. A. B. should not thus be joined together. The lady took a more sober view of this perilous alliance with the author of "Thalaba," and she soon found (as she anticipated) that she made a bad hand of "Thalaba's" prosody. It was to her "like attempting to drive a tilbury on a tram-road. You would laugh to see me in the agony of composition." So at last the scheme dropped. But if Southey had not been the most guileless of men, we might suspect the bard of a deep-laid plot upon the lady's affections.

Thenceforth the intimacy increased, and as a sincere record of a literary life it becomes interesting. Southey relates to

his correspondent all his incessant labors, his articles for the *Quarterly*, his squabbles with editors and publishers, his plans of greater works, some of which remained unaccomplished, and the results of his indefatigable reading, of which the most complete evidence is to be found in that strange and amusing book "The Doctor." There Southey gave a free rein to his learning and to his drollery: nobody but himself could have written it. Some twenty or thirty years were spent in collecting the odds and ends of this singular conglomerate, which was at last moulded into shape. "The Doctor" is certainly the most characteristic, if not the best, of Southey's prose writings. It deserves to retain a place in literature, not only for its originality, but for its pathos and for its fun. Miss Bowles said of it with truth, "There is the concentrated essence of a life's reading in these two volumes; and, better, of a life's feeling; and, best of all to me, I found *you* in every chapter." Southey, who is not afraid of startling comparisons with past greatness, replies, "There is something of 'Tristram Shandy,' in its character, something of Rabelais, more of Montaigne, and a little of old Burton, but the predominant character is my own." He appears to have thought that there was no great disparity between himself and these eminent persons.

It was Southey's misfortune that he was compelled to write book after book, and article after article, for the daily bread of his family. His means were small, his pension inconsiderable, and literature was his chief resource. Literature is a charming mistress, but a bad servant-of-all-work. Upon the whole, whatever he did best in this kind of composition for the market is to be found in his biographical writings: he found biography pleasant, easy, and profitable. We have already mentioned with all honor his "Life of Nelson," to which he subsequently added the lives of other naval heroes.

The "Life of Wesley" is a valuable contribution to the history of Methodism, and the "Life of Cowper" an interesting psychological study. Of Cowper, however, he says in these letters, that some mystery remains unrevealed, and that it might have been disclosed from Mr. Newton's correspondence. But he adds that "his mind is made up that, if it ever be revealed, it shall not be by himself. It would mingle too distressingly with all one's thoughts and feelings concerning

Cowper." Had Cowper committed, or imagined himself to have committed, some crime? We shall never know. But the probability is, that it was a mere hypochondriacal and imaginary effect of his state of mind, as Southey suggests. He was most unlikely to have committed any grave offence, but very likely to imagine that he had done so.

"Genius," says Southey in one of these letters, "is common enough (I had almost said too common), but nothing is so uncommon as the good sense which gives it its right direction." That is a saying worth remembering; but it is impossible to read this correspondence without feeling that, if Southey had a good deal of genius, the allowance of good sense was not always in proportion to it. Mr. Dowden, with the enthusiasm of an editor, declares that he was a man "sound to the core," though cursed with an irritable nervous system, "dangerously excitable." This must be the excuse for the numerous harsh, incorrect, and intemperate judgments to be met with in these pages. But we are reluctantly led to the conclusion that Southey, in spite of his high principles and his noble aspirations, was singularly incapable of forming a just opinion of his contemporaries or of the times in which he lived. The French Revolution half turned his youthful brain in the direction of democracy, and he wrote "Joan of Arc." Subsequent events twisted him round, and he wrote the "Vision of Judgment." The Reform Bill was to him a letting loose of all the powers of evil. Something, therefore, was wanting to give his genius its right direction.

Mrs. Southey, who had long been a complete invalid, died in November, 1837, and at about that date this published correspondence ends. The later letters of Miss Bowles are lost; and the editor has wisely abstained from entering at greater length on the circumstances attending the marriage of Southey to her who had so long been the cherished depository of his thoughts and feelings. The marriage cannot be said to have been an unhappy one, for never were two human beings better suited to each other. But it was accompanied with very painful incidents. Southey's mental powers began to give way. "He had been," says Mr. Dowden, "an Arab steed bearing the load of a packhorse; he bore it long and well, then quivered and fell by the way." But in those hours of darkness, that antechamber of the tomb, it was no slight allevia-

tion of the griefs of failing nature that one who entirely knew and loved him was by his side, and his eye brightened to the last with a momentary intelligence at her name. Nor do we suppose that Caroline Bowles ever regretted the sacrifice she had made in becoming his wife, though Mr. Landor styled her "a martyr and a saint." She possessed one of those fervent, pious, and devoted natures which would see in such a martyrdom the triumph of love and duty. Her life had gradually become absorbed in that of her illustrious friend, and her idea of heaven itself was companionship with him. After his death she returned to Lymington, where she, too, died in 1854. There is something singularly touching in the letters, which enable us to trace this intercourse of two kindred souls, from the first slight commencement to its solemn termination, and one thinks with pleasure of the innocent happiness which their friendship cast over lives otherwise not unclouded.

We cannot dismiss this volume without some notice of the correspondence between Southey and Shelley, which is annexed to it, from a transcript made by Miss Bowles. These letters are in the highest degree remarkable, and add a memorable page to the painful history of Shelley's life and opinions. Early in life (for in 1816 Shelley says it was "some years ago") the poets had met—Shelley then at nineteen, Southey at eight-and-thirty. The impression left on Shelley's mind was favorable. He regarded the elder bard with admiration as a poet, and with respect as a man; and in 1816 he sent him a copy of "Alastor," as a mark of respect. A bitter review of "The Revolt of Islam" appeared in the *Quarterly* in 1820, which was erroneously attributed to Southey; and their correspondence was renewed in different terms. Southey had not written the article, and, indeed, had not read any of Shelley's publications except the "Alastor;" but the incidents of Shelley's life which had occurred in the interval, were known to him, and they called forth his strongest censure and remonstrance. Shelley replied from Pisa in a more moderate tone than might have been expected, and sent Southey his later works, including "The Cenci" and the "Prometheus." To this latter Southey responded by an appalling picture of Shelley's own career.

Some men [he said] are wicked by disposition; others become so in their weakness, yielding to temptation; but you have corrupted

in yourself an excellent nature. You have sought for temptation and courted it, and have reasoned yourself into a state of mind so pernicious that your character, with your domestic arrangements, as you term it, might furnish a subject for the drama more instructive, and scarcely less painful, than the detestable story of the "Cenci," and this has proceeded directly from your principles. It is the atheist's tragedy.

Southey never wrote anything more powerful or more deeply felt than this letter.

From The Saturday Review.
SERVANT-HUNTING.

IF rich people are not obliged to work for their own bread, they have to undergo considerable toil and labor for those who work for them. It is not our present purpose to enter into the miseries of being slave-driven by first-rate servants; but we may point out that even servant-catching in the first instance is a work of some magnitude. And servant-hunting, as a sport, has this agreeable peculiarity, that those who endeavor to catch servants are not unlikely to catch masters. In this respect it somewhat resembles lion-hunting. You may catch the lion—or the lion may catch you.

There are a great many methods of servant-hunting. Most people are more or less dependent on registry offices; but there are certain amateurs who take a special pleasure in suiting their friends with, and finding places for, servants—an amusement which has much in common with the more ambitious occupation of match-making. These benevolent people know of an excellent cook that will suit you exactly; and, if you want to find a place for a butler, they know the kindest and best and richest of masters, who requires just such a servant. It is scarcely necessary to add that their swans are usually geese. At regular registry offices it is highly entertaining to hear the opinion of your acquaintances current below stairs. On inquiring why a certain servant left his last master, who happens to be one of your intimates, you are informed that your friend and his wife are "queer sort of people," that no servants "stop with them long," that "the missus is always meddling in the kitchen," and that the master is completely under the thumb of an old butler, who persuades him to discharge all servants that will not stoop

to make it worth his while to allow them to remain. Some people prefer advertisements to registry offices, and that system is often successful enough; but when it is resorted to, every post brings a wearisome heap of letters, most of which are much in this style: "Sir in answer to your advertisement I am now disengaged threw the establishment being broken up my character is good." The answers never contain any information worth knowing except that the writers apply for your situation. But the worst of all methods of servant-hunting is to ask your own or other people's servants to assist you in the pursuit.

Many people living in the country must have experienced the doubtful pleasures of going up to London for a couple of nights' servant-hunting. Perhaps a butler-hunter receives a number of applications, and he writes to invite the applicants to call upon him. The registry keepers are also informed that he will be found at certain hours on a given day, and everything is prepared for a grand campaign. His morning will resemble in many respects that of a celebrated London physician. He will spend his time in one room receiving his visitors. No sooner will one of them be shown out than another will be shown in. Like a physician, he will have to question, and examine with a critical eye, each person who comes to see him; but, unlike the physician, he will pocket no guineas. With some few exceptions his visitors will be a lugubrious-looking lot, much resembling undertakers. A certain proportion of them will be no better than what are commonly known as "greengrocers." Some of them will begin by saying that they lived last with a duke or a marquess, but it will turn out on cross-examination that they were simply at the house of one or other of these personages on a job as hired waiters. Some will be spirituous-looking men, with beery noses, ginnish eyes, and trembling hands; "D.T." will be too plainly written on their faces to make further negotiations necessary. Others will have an air of oppressive piety, reminding one of the butler in *Punch* who, when asked what religion he followed, replied, "Well, sir, what little I do in that way is with the Hanabaptists." The butler-hunter will be astonished to find how many of his applicants have been in a business which did not answer—usually a public-house—and wish to return to domestic service. Such prodigals as these the judicious will take good care

to avoid. The most respectable of the candidates will generally have an unmistakable expression of ill-temper. We well remember a man applying for the situation of butler who had every appearance of a thoroughly good servant. His testimonials were unexceptionable, and the only mystery was how such a paragon of perfection could be out of place. There was, however, a certain something about his well-ordered features which made us suspect that he could be cross, if he liked. On being pressed on the point, he gave himself an excellent character for temper, "but," he added, with an expression full of deep meaning, "I don't like to be *putt* upon." Disagreeable as a morning devoted to interviewing servants may be, it is far more satisfactory than corresponding with them. The inexperienced might be surprised to find how little information a servant can contrive to convey in a letter. The most astute diplomatist could not more completely conceal everything that his correspondent could wish to know. Nor are servants very astute in understanding letters addressed to them by would-be employers. Before engaging servants we always like to give them thoroughly to understand what we expect of them. In accordance with our custom, we once wrote a letter to a butler who had offered his services, describing his future duties at some length. In reply, we received the following curt epistle: "Sir, as I find it is not a butler but an odd man you want, I decline your situation." We suppose that among servants a man is known almost as well by the wages he gives as by his name, for every servant that applies for your situations knows to a pound what you paid his predecessor; he generally knows also the customs of your house, what you will stand, and what you will not, and it is absolutely useless to get a new servant with the idea that he will not continue the abuses into which the old one had gradually drifted. The new one will take them up at exactly the point at which the other left them, with a wonderful knowledge of his subject. One is often tempted to wish that one could learn as much about one's servants as they seem to know about oneself; it might perhaps be as well, too, if we could see ourselves as servants see us.

Some of the most difficult servants to get are footmen. It is true that a very large number of pigmy footmen are always to be had for the asking; but good footmen of decent size are rarities. There is something exceedingly demoral-

izing to a servant in the knowledge that he is six feet high. He cannot help being aware that under such circumstances his morals are of little importance. We have heard the theory advanced that no one should think of asking the character of a footman who is more than six feet high. We are inclined to believe that unambitious people would be wise in avoiding tall footmen altogether. Short men are quite as often good servants as tall ones; they give themselves fewer airs, and they do not constantly live in hopes of "bettering themselves." Indeed they are usually anxious to remain in their situations; for they know very well that they would find it exceedingly difficult to get a fresh one. Even more troublesome to find than good footmen are good coachmen and grooms. Very rich men who keep both stud grooms and head coachmen may get what they want with a moderate amount of difficulty; but those who require good coachmen who shall also take charge of their stables can rarely find exactly what they want. Coachmen may roughly be divided into three classes—those who are bad all round; those who are good London coachmen, but know little about the management of horses; and those who understand the management of horses, but are inefficient London coachmen. It is next to impossible to find out much about coachmen until one has tried them both in London and in the country. They all thoroughly recommend themselves, and confidently assert their knowledge of horses, horsemanship, and the art of driving; but very little can be known of their skill until they have been tried with an awkward pair of horses in a Bond Street crowd, in a morning's shopping north of Oxford Street, in a round of afternoon calls in South Kensington, and in a winter in the country with horses suffering from lameness and influenza. So many qualities are necessary in a good coachman that written characters from former masters convey but little information, and many a first-rate second coachman makes a very indifferent head man. A thoroughly efficient head coachman is generally an unbearable tyrant, and yet a man who has only been an under coachman will have to gain his experience entirely at your cost and inconvenience.

If good male domestics are hard to find, what shall be said of women-servants? In most households there are about three women to every man servant; so, if masters have some little servant-hunting to occupy their time, mistresses have treble

the amount. Most married ladies of any experience must be able to recall anything but pleasant memories of the grim females that have offered their services as cooks, of ponderous women with many ribbons and large brooches who have desired to become their "cook-housekeepers," and of scullery drabs who called themselves good plain cooks. From red-faced widows redolent of crape to hard-featured, print-dressed she-dragons that look like female warders, the ordinary run of women that apply for cooks' situations are by no means attractive. Nor do we think that many mistresses would be able to say that lady's-maid-hunting was a much pleasanter occupation than cook-hunting. Until they are thirty lady's-maids are apt to be too much engrossed with their own love affairs to attend to the wants of their mistresses; and after they are thirty they too often spend their time in quarrelling with and making mischief among their fellow-servants.

But, after all, servant-hunting, like other sports, has its pleasures. Far from all servants being bad, there are many who do so much to make us comfortable that the wages we give them seem nothing like a fair repayment for the trouble they take for us. All day long, and often much of the night, they are at our beck and call; they bear patiently the brunt of our testiness and ill-temper, and do everything in their power to humor our fads and fancies. They are far more refined than some of the guests we are obliged to entertain; they resist the temptations to rob us which our carelessness often offers to them; they bear good-humoredly the toils which our dissipations entail upon them, and they endure with resignation the bad language or the lengthy devotions which we, according to our various dispositions, may choose to inflict upon them. When we have got servants of such a stamp as this—and they are not very rare exceptions—we look back with satisfaction to the day on which, with perhaps considerable hesitation and not a few misgivings, we decided upon engaging them. It does not do to be too fussy when searching for servants, nor is it well to pester either applicants or their former employers with too many questions; it is undesirable to press for letters from their clergymen, to ask them whether they are engaged to be married, or to inquire whether they have had measles and whooping-cough; but, for all that, we are satisfied that there would be far fewer complaints about servants if people would

only be more careful before engaging them. In short, those who wish to have bright faces about them, popular houses, contented guests, and few troubles, would do well to learn early in life all the principles, the mysteries, and the subtleties of the important science of servant-hunting.

From The Academy.

THREE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SIR HORACE WALPOLE.

I HAVE found among some family papers three letters of Horace Walpole addressed to my grandfather, and send you copies, supposing that possibly the readers of the *Academy* might be interested by them.

I may add that Walpole makes mention of the acquaintance, with a kindly account of his correspondent, in a letter to Mann of August 9, 1784 (Letters, ed. Cunningham, 1880, viii. 493, 494). M. François de Soyres had come to England in 1781 with an introduction to Walpole from the Prince de Bauffremont, and was recommended by Walpole to the Mount Edgcombe family as tutor to the son, whom he accompanied in a "grand tour" of two years' duration. I have omitted some passages of the letters referring to matters connected with the Edgcombes of no general interest.

JOHN DE SOYRES.

I.

Berkeley Square.
March 27, 1784.

I am much obliged to you for your letters, Sr, and must not run farther into your Debt, as I am already in arrears for two. . . . At present our whole Island is in the ferment of a new Election of a House of Commons, and of all Themes I know not one so tiresome as That of a contested Election. I do not interest myself in a single one, & as much as possible keep out of the Sound of all. I wish myself at my own house in the Country, but We have at present so bitter a codicil to a most severe Winter, that Berkeley Square was as much covered with Snow this morning as It was two months ago. Indeed We have not suffered such havoc as you describe at Vienna & as we hear from many parts of the Continent. . . . We are going to have

a Solemn Jubilee at Westminster abbey in honor of Handel, whom We adopted, & who is revered as the Patriarch of our Music. Indeed our Taste is a little deviated to the branch of Dancing, which we possess in a perfection that rivals Paris. It is very seldom that I go to the Theatre now, but I was at the Opera last week, & saw s'even such dancers on the Stage at once, as cannot, I believe, be matched in Europe; there were Le Picq, young Vestris, Dauberval, & Slingsby, the Simonet, the Theodore, & the Rossi. It does not much become my age to talk of Dancers, — & yet I should make no apology for having been to see Charles XIIth or Kouli Kan, who deserved to be looked at only with horror. My countrymen have acted with more rationality in paying great distinction to your countryman, Monsieur de Bouillé, who is here, & whose humanity in the late War was equal to his bravery. I am Sr with great regard

yr obedient

humble Sert

HORACE WALPOLE.

To Mr de Soyres.

II.

Strawberry hill.
aug. 9th 1784.

. . . I cannot pretend, Sr, to repay your Parisian news with any interesting events from an English Village. We do hear even here of air-balloons; nay, by chance I saw a Lilliputian one over Richmond hill. I am not young enough to run after fashions; and too old to commence experimental Philosopher. I shall be gone before aerial navigation is perfected, or ranked with the Philosopher's Stone! Animal Magnetism has not yet made much impression here. These Disquisitions are at least preferable to religious metaphysics. People had better break their necks voluntarily from a bladder in the clouds, than be burnt for not believing what they do not understand. Monsr Montgolfier is honestier too than the Founders of novel Doctrines, for if he has invented a new way of going to heaven, he risked his own neck first, before he persuaded others to try if the untrodden path was practicable.

I have the honor of being, Sr

yr obedient

humble Sert HOR WALPOLE.

To Mr de Soyres.

III.

Berkeley Square
March 29. 1785.

I am again in yr Debt, Sr, for another letter of March 5th from Naples; & tho I

endeavour now to acquit myself, it will be very imperfectly, & with difficulty, as I have but one hand yet free. I was confined 14 weeks; then went out for a fortnight, & have now another relapse in all my right arm; less owing even to my Disorder & my age, then to the uncommonly severe continuation of bad Weather. It snowed fast for four hours two days ago, & is still a hard frost. There have been tho' rarely, as cold winters in England, but nobody has heard of one of so long duration. Lord & Lady Mount Edgcombe have been extremely kind to me & visited me often in my confinement. I am very glad they will so soon have the satisfaction of seeing Mr Edgcombe. I was glad too to find Mr Morrice's Death was a fable. He will not, I hope, stay at Naples for health, if Vesuvius threatens an Eruption. One should dread even to be Spectator of such calamities, — nor do I know so strong a proof of the force of Habitude, as They are who continue to live on a crust of Fire! I am constantly anxious about my good Friend Sr Horace Mann, his nephew set out again a fortnight ago in haste, on receiving a letter written by his Uncle's Servant, which mentioned a return of his Disorder. I much fear the consequence.

I am glad you was pleased with Pæstum, Sr; but should be more inclined to envy you the sight of Pompeii; as I had rather view Remains of places where the Arts had been brought to perfection, than to see the rudiments. Whatever Nations began, the Greeks were in my eyes the only People who discovered the Standard of Taste in whatever they undertook. In how few Centuries did they give the true & last touches to Eloquence, to many kinds of Poetry, to Architecture, to Sculpture, from Colossal to the most diminutive, & I believe to Painting, for as their Authors & Roman Authors speak in equal terms of both their Statues & Pictures; & as we know & see that they did not exaggerate in their Encomiums on the former, is it credible that they could bestow equal praises on the Apollo & Venus &c and on vile daubings? Should I be told that those Authors are still more profuse of Eulogiums on their Music, which we have no reason to believe was very extraordinary; I not only should reply that the Comparison between Statues & pictures can be more justly made, but that Music must have greater effect on the passions of persons unaccustomed to it than on generations habituated to its improvements; & as we know that charm-

ing Poetry accompanied Sound, the fascination was increased. In Short, Sr, were I King of Naples, I should be inclined to turn up every acre round my Capital, where I could suppose any of the destroyed Cities had stood, lest new Earthquakes should destroy what still exists underground, — so I should at Rome, & in every part of Italy where I could to recover Grecian Works.

We are not visited by Earthquakes now, yet last night the Arts received a wound; Lord Spencer's House was burnt to the ground, & with other good pictures & valuable goods, besides the loss of the Mansion itself, I fear the very fine picture of Andrea Sacchi was consumed. I do not yet know the circumstances. My hand is tired, & you will excuse my taking leave; but I shall be very glad to renew our acquaintance at yr return, as I am with great regard

Sr yr obedient
humble Sert HOR WALPOLE.

From The Nineteenth Century.
ENGLISH PLAYERS IN GERMANY, 1600.

ENTERING the Athenæum one afternoon in the spring of 1840 I found my old friends Mr. Amyot, the treasurer, and Sir Henry Ellis, the secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, in quiet confab before the hall fire. On seeing me Mr. Amyot said: "Oh, here is Thoms, perhaps he can give us a hint or suggest something," and I was immediately informed of the subject they were considering. Sir Henry had received notice that the prince consort had notified his intention of attending a meeting of the society for the purpose of being admitted a fellow, and although Sir Henry had some very curious antiquities to exhibit, he had not a paper of sufficient interest to read before his Royal Highness. Could I suggest a fitting subject for such a paper? No, my antiquarian knowledge was below par, and I had no suggestion to offer. But in the course of conversation stress was laid upon the desirability of finding a literary or historical topic which should have both a German and English interest in it. Upon this hint I spake; and knowing that both my learned friends were great Shakespearian scholars, I asked whether they did not think that the visit of an English company of players to Germany about the year 1600 might furnish materials for such a paper as they

wanted. To my great surprise neither of them knew anything about this. Neither, perhaps, should I have done so, but from the fact that at about the time of Miss Ellen Tree's professional visit to Germany I had found some allusions to the performances of a company of English actors in that country in Horn's "*Poesie und Beredsamkeit der Deutschen*," and had, anticipating Captain Cuttle's sensible advice, "made a note of it." To my great surprise, neither Amyot nor Sir Henry knew anything about this matter; but after questioning as to what I recollected about it, they would not let me go till they had extorted from me a promise that I would look over my notes, and if I found in them materials for a short paper that I would write one, and put Sir Henry out of his difficulty. Those who knew the worthy head of the British Museum, and that his business habits were as great as the variety and extent of his general knowledge, will recognize him in two very characteristic remarks which this conversation called forth. In the course of it I had mentioned the play of "Titus Andronicus." "Bother that," he said, "how am I to pronounce it, Andronicus or Andronicus?" and as I was leaving he enjoined me, "Keep your paper very short, not to take more than seven minutes in the reading." On my return home and look-

ing over my notes I found in them what I believed to be materials for a paper which I believed would do me no discredit. So I set to and worked them up in the form of a letter to our excellent treasurer, who, as well as Sir Henry, was pleased with it. On the appointed evening (May 21, 1840) I went to Somerset House, anxious to witness how Sir Henry would serve up the dainty dish which had been prepared to set before the prince. But I was doomed to disappointment. Prince Albert, one of whose characteristics was punctuality, had been accidentally detained at Buckingham Palace, and instead of arriving at the Society of Antiquaries at 8 o'clock, as had been arranged, did not enter the meeting until 8.30, at which time it had been arranged he should proceed to the Royal Society to pass through the same ceremony of being admitted a fellow. The consequence was, that after his formal admission as a fellow by Lord Aberdeen, and making a rapid inspection of the antiquities prepared for exhibition, and having had presented to him the officers, council, and some few of the more eminent fellows, his Royal Highness proceeded up-stairs to the Royal Society, and my poor paper, which had caused so much anxiety to the authorities and to myself, was left unread.

W. J. THOMS.

TRAVELLING MOSS. — Our readers have probably never read or heard of the "travelling moss." It was one of the most curious things that ever occurred in the Border country. It happened in the November of 1771, just one hundred and ten years ago, between the rivers Sark and Esk, in the parish of Kirk-andrews, some four miles from Longtown, on the estate of Sir James Graham, of Netherby. During a dark and tempestuous night, without giving any warning, there was a sudden and overwhelming eruption of the Solway Moss, the crash of which descending from a higher to a lower level, greatly alarmed the fears, and made the very bones of the inhabitants to tremble. Why it should have been so fast moored, age after age, and now have moved away from its native place like a floating island, nobody could tell, and, indeed, they had not time to cogitate that question. Those who resided where the vast mass of eruptive matter broke forth, filled with consternation and dread, had to flee almost naked from their houses to find shelter and safety on higher ground from the desolating, foul, muddy flood,

leaving furniture and cattle behind them—a prey to the black and nauseous stream. People flocked from all parts of the country to gaze on the mysterious phenomenon and the ruin it had produced. The rental of the region was estimated to have exceeded £400 a year, and the area it covered was about five hundred acres, and in some places the stagnant lake was thirty feet in depth. About twenty-eight families and many little farms were greatly injured by the pitchy pool vomited up, as it were, from the bowels of the earth. The distress would have been much greater but for the humane and generous laird, who contributed to the support of the people involved, and replaced as far as possible their various losses. By means of long channels in various directions, under the skilful management of a Yorkshireman of the name of Wilson, the water was let off, and the earthy matter was at length carted away. Many years elapsed before the traces of this singular calamity disappeared, and it is matter for thankfulness that there has never since been a recurrence of it.

Leeds Mercury.